THE CASE OF WAGNER

By Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche

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BY

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TRANSLATED BY J. M. KENNEDY

The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche

The First Complete and Authorised English Translation

Edited by Dr Oscar Levy

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

Nietzsche wrote the rough draft of "The Case of Wagner" in Turin, during the month of May 1888; he completed it in Sils Maria towards the end of June of the same year, and it was published in the following autumn. "Nietzsche *contra* Wagner" was written about the middle of December 1888; but, although it was printed and corrected before the New Year, it was not published until long afterwards owing to Nietzsche's complete breakdown in the first days of 1889.

In reading these two essays we are apt to be deceived, by their virulent and forcible tone, into believing that the whole matter is a mere cover for hidden fire,—a mere blind of æsthetic discussion concealing a deep and implacable personal feud which demands and will have vengeance. In spite of all that has been said to the contrary, many people still hold this view of the two little works before us; and, as the actual facts are not accessible to every one, and rumours are more easily believed than verified, the error

of supposing that these pamphlets were dictated by personal animosity, and even by Nietzsche's envy of Wagner in his glory, seems to be a pretty common one. Another very general error is to suppose that the point at issue here is not one concerning music at all, but concerning religion. It is taken for granted that the aspirations, the particular quality, the influence, and the method of an art like music, are matters quite distinct from the values and the conditions prevailing in the culture with which it is in harmony, and that however many Christian elements may be discovered in Wagnerian texts, Nietzsche had no right to raise æsthetic objections because he happened to entertain the extraordinary view that these Christian elements had also found their way into Wagnerian music.

To both of these views there is but one reply:—they are absolutely false.

In the "Ecce Homo," Nietzsche's autobiography,—a book which from cover to cover and line for line is sincerity itself—we learn what Wagner actually meant to Nietzsche. On pages 41, 44, 84, 122, 129, &c., we cannot doubt that Nietzsche is speaking from his heart,—and what does he say? —In impassioned tones he admits his profound indebtedness to the great musician, his love for him, his gratitude to him,—how Wagner was the only German who had ever been anything to him—how his friendship with Wagner constituted the happiest and most valuable experience of his life,—how his breach with Wagner almost killed him. And, when we remember, too, that Wagner on his part also declared that he was "alone" after he had lost "that man" (Nietzsche), we begin to perceive that personal bitterness and animosity are out of the question here. We feel we are on a higher plane, and that we must not judge these two men as if they were a couple of little business people who had had a suburban squabble.

Nietzsche declares ("Ecce Homo," p. 24) that he never attacked persons as persons. If he used a name at all, it was merely as a means to an end, just as one might use a magnifying glass in order to make a general, but elusive and intricate fact more clear and more apparent; and if he used the name of David Strauss, without bitterness or spite (for he did not even know the man), when he wished to personify Culture-Philistinism, so, in the same spirit, did he use the name of Wagner, when he wished to personify the general decadence of modern ideas, values, aspirations and Art.

Nietzsche's ambition, throughout his life, was to regenerate European culture. In the first period of his relationship with Wagner, he thought that he had found the man who was prepared to lead in this direction. For a long while he regarded his master as the Saviour of Germany, as the innovator and renovator who was going to arrest the decadent current of his time and lead men to a greatness which had died with antiquity. And so thoroughly did he understand his duties as a disciple, so wholly was he devoted to this cause, that, in spite of all his unquestioned gifts and the excellence of his original achievements, he was for a long while regarded as a mere "literary lackey" in Wagner's service, in all those circles where the rising musician was most disliked.

Gradually, however, as the young Nietzsche developed and began to gain an independent view of life and humanity, it seemed to him extremely doubtful whether Wagner actually was pulling the same way with him. Whereas, theretofore, he had identified Wagner's ideals with his own, it now dawned upon him slowly that the regeneration of German culture, of European culture, and the trans-valuation of values which would be necessary for this regeneration, really lay off the track of Wagnerism. He saw that he had endowed Wagner with a good deal that was more his own than Wagner's. In his love he had transfigured the friend, and the composer of "Parsifal" and the man of his imagination were not one. The fact was realised step by step; disappointment upon disappointment, revelation after revelation, ultimately brought it home to him, and though his best instincts at first opposed it, the revulsion of feeling at last became too strong to be scouted, and Nietzsche was plunged into the blackest despair. Had he followed his own human inclinations, he would probably have remained Wagner's friend until the end. As it was, however, he remained loyal to his cause, and this meant denouncing his former idol.

"Joyful Wisdom," "Thus Spake Zarathustra," "Beyond Good and Evil," "The Genealogy of Morals," "The Twilight of the Idols," "The Antichrist" —all these books were but so many exhortations to mankind to step aside from the general track now trodden by Europeans. And what happened? Wagner began to write some hard things about Nietzsche; the world assumed that Nietzsche and Wagner had engaged in a paltry personal quarrel in the press, and the whole importance of the real issue was buried beneath the human, all-too-human interpretations which were heaped upon it.

Nietzsche was a musician of no mean attainments. For a long while, in his youth, his superiors had been doubtful whether he should not be educated for a musical career, so great were his gifts in this art; and if his mother had not been offered a six-years' scholarship for her son at the famous school of Pforta, Nietzsche, the scholar and philologist, would probably have been an able composer. When he speaks about music, therefore, he knows what he is talking about, and when he refers to Wagner's music in particular, the simple fact of his long intimacy with Wagner during the years at Tribschen, is a sufficient guarantee of his deep knowledge of the subject. Now Nietzsche was one of the first to recognise that the principles of art are inextricably bound up with the laws of life, that an æsthetic dogma may therefore promote or depress all vital force, and that a picture, a symphony, a poem or a statue, is just as capable of being pessimistic, anarchic, Christian or revolutionary, as a philosophy or a science is. To speak of a certain class of music as being compatible with the decline of culture, therefore, was to Nietzsche a perfectly warrantable association of ideas, and that is why, throughout his philosophy, so much stress is laid upon æsthetic considerations.

But if in England and America Nietzsche's attack on Wagner's art may still seem a little incomprehensible, let it be remembered that the Continent has long known that

Nietzsche was actually in the right Every year thousands are now added to the large party abroad who have ceased from believing in the great musical revolutionary of the seventies; that he was one with the French Romanticists and rebels has long since been acknowledged a fact in select circles, both in France and Germany, and if we still have Wagner with us in England, if we still consider Nietzsche as a heretic, when he declares that "Wagner was a musician for unmusical people," it is only because we are more removed than we imagine, from all the great movements, intellectual and otherwise, which take place on the Continent.

In Wagner's music, in his doctrine, in his whole concept of art, Nietzsche saw the confirmation, the promotion—aye, even the encouragement, of that decadence and degeneration which is now rampant in Europe; and it is for this reason, although to the end of his life he still loved Wagner, the man and the friend, that we find him, on the very eve of his spiritual death, exhorting us to abjure Wagner the musician and the artist.

ANTHONY M. LUDOVICI.

PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION[1]

In spite of the adverse criticism with which the above preface has met at the hands of many reviewers since the summer of last year, I cannot say that I should feel justified, even after mature consideration, in altering a single word or sentence it contains. If I felt inclined to make any changes at all, these would take the form of extensive additions, tending to confirm rather than to modify the general argument it advances; but, any omissions of which I may have been guilty in the first place, have been so fully rectified since, thanks to the publication of the English translations of Daniel Halévy's and Henri Lichtenberger's works, "The Life of Friedrich Nietzsche,"[2] and "The Gospel of Superman,"[3] respectively, that, were it not for the fact that the truth about this matter cannot be repeated too often, I should have refrained altogether from including any fresh remarks of my own in this Third Edition.

In the works just referred to (pp. 129 *et seq.* in Halévy's book, and pp. 78 *et seq.* in Lichtenberger's book), the statement I made in my preface to "Thoughts out of Season," vol. i., and which I did not think it necessary to repeat in my first preface to these pamphlets, will be found to receive the fullest confirmation.

The statement in question was to the effect that many long years before these pamphlets were even projected, Nietzsche's apparent *volte-face* in regard to his hero Wagner had been not only foreshadowed, but actually stated in plain words, in two works written during his friendship with Wagner,—the works referred to being "The Birth of Tragedy"

(1872), and "Wagner in Bayreuth" (1875) of which Houston Stuart Chamberlain declares not only that it possesses "undying classical worth" but that "a perusal of it is indispensable to all who wish to follow the question [of Wagner] to its roots."[4]

The idea that runs through the present work like a leitmotif—the idea that Wagner was at bottom more of a mime than a musician—was so far an ever present thought with Nietzsche that it is even impossible to ascertain the period when it was first formulated.

In Nietzsche's wonderful autobiography (*Ecce Homo,* p. 88), in the section dealing with the early works just mentioned, we find the following passage: "In the second of the two essays [Wagner in Bayreuth] with a profound certainty of instinct, I already characterised the elementary factor in Wagner's nature as a theatrical talent which, in all his means and aspirations, draws its final conclusions." And as early as 1874, Nietzsche wrote in his diary:—"Wagner is a born actor. Just as Goethe was an abortive painter, and Schiller an abortive orator, so Wagner was an abortive theatrical genius. His attitude to music is that of the actor; for he knows how to sing and speak, as it were out of different souls and from absolutely different worlds (*Tristan* and the *Meistersinger*)".

There is, however, no need to multiply examples, seeing, as I have said, that in the translations of Halévy's and Lichtenberger's books the reader will find all the independent evidence he could possibly desire, disproving the popular, and even the learned belief that, in the two pamphlets before us we have a complete, apparently unaccountable, and therefore "demented" *volte-face* on Nietzsche's part. Nevertheless, for fear lest some doubt should still linger in certain minds concerning this point, and with the view of adding interest to these essays, the Editor considered it advisable, in the Second Edition, to add a number of extracts from Nietzsche's diary of the year 1878 (ten years before "The Case of Wagner," and "Nietzsche *contra* Wagner" were written) in order to show to what extent those learned critics who complain of Nietzsche's "morbid and uncontrollable recantations and revulsions of feeling," have overlooked even the plain facts of the case when forming their all-too-hasty conclusions. These extracts will be found at the end of "Nietzsche *contra* Wagner." While reading them, however, it should not be forgotten that they were never intended for publication by Nietzsche himself—a fact which accounts for their unpolished and sketchy form—and that they were first published in vol. xi. of the first German Library Edition (pp. 99-129) only when he was a helpless invalid, in 1897. Since then, in 1901 and 1906 respectively, they have been reprinted, once in the large German Library Edition (vol. xi. pp. 181-202), and once in the German Pocket Edition, as an appendix to "Human-All-too-Human," Part II.

An altogether special interest now attaches to these pamphlets; for, in the first place we are at last in possession of Wagner's own account of his development, his art, his aspirations and his struggles, in the amazing self-revelation entitled *My Life*[5]; and

secondly, we now have *Ecce Homo,* Nietzsche's autobiography, in which we learn for the first time from Nietzsche's own pen to what extent his history was that of a double devotion—to Wagner on the one hand, and to his own life task, the Transvaluation of all Values, on the other.

Readers interested in the Nietzsche-Wagner controversy will naturally look to these books for a final solution of all the difficulties which the problem presents. But let them not be too sanguine. From first to last this problem is not to be settled by "facts." A good deal of instinctive choice, instinctive aversion, and instinctive suspicion are necessary here. A little more suspicion, for instance, ought to be applied to Wagner's *My Life,* especially in England, where critics are not half suspicious enough about a continental artist's self-revelations, and are too prone, if they have suspicions at all, to apply them in the wrong place.

An example of this want of *finesse* in judging foreign writers is to be found in Lord Morley's work on Rousseau,—a book which ingenuously takes for granted everything that a writer like Rousseau cares to say about himself, without considering for an instant the possibility that Rousseau might have practised some hypocrisy. In regard to Wagner's life we might easily fall into the same error—that is to say, we might take seriously all he says concerning himself and his family affairs.

We should beware of this, and should not even believe Wagner when he speaks badly about himself. No one speaks badly about himself without a reason, and the question in this case is to find out the reason. Did Wagner—in the belief that genius was always immoral—wish to pose as an immoral Egotist, in order to make us believe in his genius, of which he himself was none too sure in his innermost heart? Did Wagner wish to appear "sincere" in his biography, in order to awaken in us a belief in the sincerity of his music, which he likewise doubted, but wished to impress upon the world as "true"? Or did he wish to be thought badly of in connection with things that were not true, and that consequently did not affect him, in order to lead us off the scent of true things, things he was ashamed of and which he wished the world to ignore—just like Rousseau (the similarity between the two is more than a superficial one) who barbarously pretended to have sent his children to the foundling hospital, in order not to be thought incapable of having had any children at all? In short, where is the bluff in Wagner's biography? Let us therefore be careful about it, and all the more so because Wagner himself guarantees the truth of it in the prefatory note. If we were to be credulous here, we should moreover be acting in direct opposition to Nietzsche's own counsel as given in the following aphorisms (Nos. 19 and 20, p. 89):—

"It is very difficult to trace the course of Wagner's development,—no trust must be placed in his own description of his soul's experiences. He writes party-pamphlets for his followers.

"It is extremely doubtful whether Wagner is able to bear witness about himself."

While on p. 37 (the note), we read:—"He [Wagner] was not proud enough to be able to suffer the truth about himself. Nobody had less pride than he. Like Victor Hugo he remained true to himself even in his biography,—he remained an actor."

However, as a famous English judge has said:— "Truth will come out, even in the witness box," and, as we may add in this case, even in an autobiography. There is one statement in Wagner's *My Life* which sounds true to my ears at least-a statement which, in my opinion, has some importance, and to which Wagner himself seems to grant a mysterious significance. I refer to the passage on p. 93 of vol. i., in which Wagner says: —"Owing to the exceptional vivacity and innate susceptibility of my nature ... I gradually became conscious of a certain power of transporting or bewildering my more indolent companions."

This seems innocent enough. When, however, it is read in conjunction with Nietzsche's trenchant criticism, particularly on pp. 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18 of this work, and also with a knowledge of Wagner's music, it becomes one of the most striking passages in Wagner's autobiography; for it records how soon he became conscious of his dominant instinct and faculty.

I know perfectly well that the Wagnerites will not be influenced by these remarks. Their gratitude to Wagner is too great for this. He has supplied the precious varnish wherewith to hide the dull ugliness of our civilisation. He has given to souls despairing over the materialism of this world, to souls despairing of themselves, and longing to be rid of themselves, the indispensable hashish and morphia wherewith to deaden their inner discords. These discords are everywhere apparent nowadays. Wagner is therefore a common need, a common benefactor. As such he is bound to be worshipped and adored in spite of all egotistical and theatrical autobiographies.

Albeit, signs are not wanting—at least among his Anglo-Saxon worshippers who stand even more in need of romanticism than their continental brethren, —which show that, in order to uphold Wagner, people are now beginning to draw distinctions between the man and the artist. They dismiss the man as "human-all-too-human," but they still maintain that there are divine qualities in his music. However distasteful the task of disillusioning these psychological tyros may be, they should be informed that no such division of a man into two parts is permissible, save in Christianity (—the body and the soul—); but that outside purely religious spheres it is utterly unwarrantable. There can be no such strange divorce between a bloom and the plant on which it blows, and has a black woman ever been known to give birth to a white child?

Wagner, as Nietzsche tells us on p. 19, "was something complete, he was a typical *decadent,* in whom every sign of 'free will' was lacking, in whom every feature was necessary." Wagner, allow me to add, was a typical representative of the nineteenth century, which was the century of contradictory values, of opposed instincts, and of every kind of inner disharmony. The genuine, the classical artists of that period, such

men as Heine, Goethe, Stendhal, and Gobineau, overcame their inner strife, and each succeeded in making a harmonious whole out of himself—not indeed without a severe struggle; for everyone of them suffered from being the child of his age, *i.e.,* a decadent. The only difference between them and the romanticists lies in the fact that they (the former) were conscious of what was wrong with them, and possessed the will and the strength to overcome their illness; whereas the romanticists chose the easier alternative —namely, that of shutting their eyes on themselves.

"I am just as much a child of my age as Wagner—*i.e.,* I am a *decadent"* says Nietzsche. "The only difference is that I recognised the fact, that I struggled against it."[6]

What Wagner did was characteristic of all romanticists and contemporary artists: he drowned and overshouted his inner discord by means of exuberant pathos and wild exaltation. Far be it from me to value Wagner's music *in extenso* here—this is scarcely a fitting opportunity to do so;—but I think it might well be possible to show, on purely psychological grounds, how impossible it was for a man like Wagner to produce real art. For how can harmony, order, symmetry, mastery, proceed from uncontrolled discord, disorder, disintegration, and chaos? The fact that an art which springs from such a marshy soil may, like certain paludal plants, be "wonderful," "gorgeous," and "overwhelming," cannot be denied; but true art it is not. It is so just as little as Gothic architecture is,—that style which, in its efforts to escape beyond the tragic contradiction in its mediæval heart, yelled its hysterical cry heavenwards and even melted the stones of its structures into a quivering and fluid jet, in order to give adequate expression to the painful and wretched conflict then raging between the body and the soul.

That Wagner, too, was a great sufferer, there can be no doubt; not, however, a sufferer from strength, like a true artist, but from weakness—the weakness of his age, which he never overcame. It is for this reason that he should be rather pitied than judged as he is now being judged by his German and English critics, who, with thoroughly neurotic suddenness, have acknowledged their revulsion of feeling a little too harshly.

"I have carefully endeavoured not to deride, or deplore, or detest ..." says Spinoza, "but to understand"; and these words ought to be our guide, not only in the case of Wagner, but in all things.

Inner discord is a terrible affliction and nothing is so certain to produce that nervous irritability which is so trying to the patient as well as to the outer world, as this so-called spiritual disease. Nietzsche was probably quite right when he said the only real and true music that Wagner ever composed did not consist of his elaborate arias and overtures, but of ten or fifteen bars which, dispersed here and there, gave expression to the composer's profound and genuine melancholy. But this melancholy had to be overcome, and Wagner with the blood of a *cabotin* in his veins, resorted to the remedy that was nearest to hand—that is to say, the art of bewildering others and himself. Thus

he remained ignorant about himself all his life; for there was, as Nietzsche rightly points out (p. 37, *note*), not sufficient pride in the man for him to desire to know or to suffer gladly the truth concerning his real nature. As an actor his ruling passion was vanity; but in his case it was correlated with a semi-conscious knowledge of the fact that all was not right with him and his art. It was this that caused him to suffer. His egomaniacal behaviour and his almost Rousseauesque fear and suspicion of others were only the external manifestations of his inner discrepancies. But, to repeat what I have already said, these abnormal symptoms are not in the least incompatible with Wagner's music, they are rather its very cause, the root from which it springs.

In reality, therefore, Wagner the man and Wagner the artist were undoubtedly one, and constituted a splendid romanticist. His music as well as his autobiography are proofs of his wonderful gifts in this direction. His success in his time, as in ours, is due to the craving of the modern world for actors, sorcerers, bewilderers and idealists who are able to conceal the ill-health and the weakness that prevail, and who please by intoxicating and exalting. But this being so, the world must not be disappointed to find the hero of a preceding age explode in the next. It must not be astonished to find a disparity between the hero's private life and his "elevating" art or romantic and idealistic gospel. As long as people will admire heroic attitudes more than heroism, such disillusionment is bound to be the price of their error. In a truly great man, life-theory and life-practice, if seen from a sufficiently lofty point of view, must and do always agree; in an actor, in a romanticist, in an idealist, and in a Christian, there is always a yawning chasm between the two, which, whatever well-meaning critics may do, cannot be bridged posthumously by acrobatic feats *in psychologicis*.

Let anyone apply this point of view to Nietzsche's life and theory. Let anyone turn his life inside out, not only as he gives it to us in his *Ecce Homo,* but as we find it related by all his biographers, friends and foes alike; and what will be the result? Even if we ignore his works—the blooms which blowed from time to time from his life—we absolutely cannot deny the greatness of the man's *private practice,* and if we fully understand and appreciate the latter, we must be singularly deficient in instinct and in *flair* if we do not suspect that some of this greatness is reflected in his life-task.

ANTHONY M. LUDOVICI.

LONDON, JULY 1911.

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[1] It should be noted that the first and second editions of these essays on Wagner appeared in pamphlet form, for which the above first preface was written.

[2] Fisher Unwin, 1911.

[3] T. N. Foulis, 1910.

[4] See *Richard Wagner,* by Houston Stuart Chamberlain (translated by G. A. Hight), pp. 15, 16.

[5] Constable & Co., 1911.

[6] See Author's Preface to "The Case of Wagner" in this volume.

THE CASE OF WAGNER

A MUSICIAN'S PROBLEM

A LETTER FROM TURIN, MAY 1888

"RIDENDO DICERE SEVERUM ..."

PREFACE

I am writing this to relieve my mind. It is not malice alone which makes me praise Bizet at the expense of Wagner in this essay. Amid a good deal of jesting I wish to make one point clear which does not admit of levity. To turn my back on Wagner was for me a piece of fate; to get to like anything else whatever afterwards was for me a triumph. Nobody, perhaps, had ever been more dangerously involved in Wagnerism, nobody had defended himself more obstinately against it, nobody had ever been so overjoyed at ridding himself of it. A long history!—Shall I give it a name?—If I were a moralist, who knows what I might not call it! Perhaps a piece of *self-mastery.*—But the philosopher does not like the moralist, neither does he like high-falutin' words....

What is the first and last thing that a philosopher demands of himself? To overcome his age in himself, to become "timeless." With what then does the philosopher have the greatest fight? With all that in him which makes him the child of his time. Very well then! I am just as much a child of my age as Wagner—*i.e.,* I am a decadent. The only difference is that I recognised the fact, that I struggled against it. The philosopher in me struggled against it.

My greatest preoccupation hitherto has been the problem of *decadence,* and I had reasons for this. "Good and evil" form only a playful subdivision of this problem. If one has trained one's eye to detect the symptoms of decline, one also understands morality, —one understands what lies concealed beneath its holiest names and tables of values: *e.g., impoverished* life, the will to nonentity, great exhaustion. Morality *denies* life.... In order to undertake such a mission I was obliged to exercise self-discipline:—I had to side against all that was morbid in myself including Wagner, including Schopenhauer, including the whole of modern *humanity.*—A profound estrangement, coldness and

soberness towards all that belongs to my age, all that was contemporary: and as the highest wish, Zarathustra's eye, an eye which surveys the whole phenomenon—mankind —from an enormous distance,—which look down upon it.—For such a goal—what sacrifice would not have been worth while? What "self-mastery"! What "self-denial"!

The greatest event of my life took the form of a *recovery.* Wagner belongs only to my diseases.

Not that I wish to appear ungrateful to this disease. If in this essay I support the proposition that Wagner is *harmful,* I none the less wish to point out unto whom, in spite of all, he is indispensable—to the philosopher. Anyone else may perhaps be able to get on without Wagner: but the philosopher is not free to pass him by. The philosopher must be the evil conscience of his age,—but to this end he must be possessed of its best knowledge. And what better guide, or more thoroughly efficient revealer of the soul, could be found for the labyrinth of the modern spirit than Wagner? Through Wagner modernity speaks her most intimate language: it conceals neither its good nor its evil; it has thrown off all shame. And, conversely, one has almost calculated the whole of the value of modernity once one is clear concerning what is good and evil in Wagner. I can perfectly well understand a musician of to-day who says: "I hate Wagner but I can endure no other music." But I should also understand a philosopher who said: "Wagner is modernity in concentrated form." There is no help for it, we must first be Wagnerites....

THE CASE OF WAGNER

1.

Yesterday—would you believe it?—I heard *Bizet's* masterpiece for the twentieth time. Once more I attended with the same gentle reverence; once again I did not run away. This triumph over my impatience surprises me. How such a work completes one! Through it one almost becomes a "masterpiece" oneself.—And, as a matter of fact, each time I heard *Carmen* it seemed to me that I was more of a philosopher, a better philosopher than at other times: I became so forbearing, so happy, so Indian, so *settled....* To sit for five hours: the first step to holiness!—May I be allowed to say that Bizet's orchestration is the only one that I can endure now? That other orchestration which is all the rage at present—the Wagnerian—is brutal, artificial and "unsophisticated" withal, hence its appeal to all the three senses of the modern soul at once. How terribly Wagnerian orchestration affects me! I call it the *Sirocco.* A disagreeable sweat breaks out all over me. All my fine weather vanishes.

Bizet's music seems to me perfect. It comes forward lightly, gracefully, stylishly. It is lovable, it does not sweat. "All that is good is easy, everything divine runs with light feet": this is the first principle of my æsthetics. This music is wicked, refined, fatalistic: and withal remains popular,—it possesses the refinement of a race, not of an individual. It is rich. It is definite. It builds, organises, completes: and in this sense it stands as a contrast to the polypus in music, to "endless melody." Have more painful, more tragic accents ever been heard on the stage before? And how are they obtained? Without grimaces! Without counterfeiting of any kind! Free from the *lie* of the grand style!—In short: this music assumes that the listener is intelligent even as a musician,—thereby it is the opposite of Wagner, who, apart from everything else, was in any case the most *ill-mannered* genius on earth (Wagner takes us as if ... he repeats a thing so often that we become desperate,—that we ultimately believe it).

And once more: I become a better man when Bizet speaks to me. Also a better musician, a better *listener*. Is it in any way possible to listen better?—I even burrow behind this music with my ears. I hear its very cause. I seem to assist at its birth. I tremble before the dangers which this daring music runs, I am enraptured over those happy accidents for which even Bizet himself may not be responsible.—And, strange to say, at bottom I do not give it a thought, or am not aware how much thought I really do give it. For quite other ideas are running through my head the while.... Has any one ever observed that music *emancipates* the spirit? gives wings to thought? and that the more one becomes a musician the more one is also a philosopher? The grey sky of abstraction seems thrilled by flashes of lightning; the light is strong enough to reveal all the details of things; to enable one to grapple with problems; and the world is surveyed as if from a mountain top.—With this I have defined philosophical pathos.—And unexpectedly *answers* drop into my lap, a small hailstorm of ice and wisdom, of problems *solved*. Where am I? Bizet makes me productive. Everything that is good makes me productive. I have gratitude for nothing else, nor have I any other touchstone for testing what is good.

2.

Bizet's work also saves; Wagner is not the only "Saviour." With it one bids farewell to the *damp* north and to all the fog of the Wagnerian ideal. Even the action in itself delivers us from these things. From Mérimée it has this logic even in passion, from him it has the direct line, *inexorable* necessity; but what it has above all else is that which belongs to sub-tropical zones—that dryness of atmosphere, that *limpidezza* of the air. Here in every respect the climate is altered. Here another kind of sensuality, another kind of sensitiveness and another kind of cheerfulness make their appeal. This music is gay, but not in a French or German way. Its gaiety is African; fate hangs over it, its happiness is short, sudden, without reprieve. I envy Bizet for having had the courage of this sensitiveness, which hitherto in the cultured music of Europe has found no means of

expression,—of this southern, tawny, sunburnt sensitiveness.... What a joy the golden afternoon of its happiness is to us! When we look out, with this music in our minds, we wonder whether we have ever seen the sea so *calm.* And how soothing is this Moorish dancing! How, for once, even our insatiability gets sated by its lascivious melancholy! —And finally love, love translated back into *Nature!* Not the love of a "cultured girl!"—no Senta-sentimentality.[1] But love as fate, as a fatality, cynical, innocent, cruel, —and precisely in this way *Nature!* The love whose means is war, whose very essence is the *mortal hatred* between the sexes!—I know no case in which the tragic irony, which constitutes the kernel of love, is expressed with such severity, or in so terrible a formula, as in the last cry of Don José with which the work ends:

"Yes, it is I who have killed her,
I—my adored Carmen!"

—Such a conception of love (the only one worthy of a philosopher) is rare: it distinguishes one work of art from among a thousand others. For, as a rule, artists are no better than the rest of the world, they are even worse—they *misunderstand* love. Even Wagner misunderstood it. They imagine that they are selfless in it because they appear to be seeking the advantage of another creature often to their own disadvantage. But in return they want to *possess* the other creature.... Even God is no exception to this rule, he is very far from thinking "What does it matter to thee whether I love thee or not?"—He becomes terrible if he is not loved in return. "*L'amour*—and with this principle one carries one's point against Gods and men—*est de tous les sentiments le plus égoïste, et par conséquent, lorsqu'il est blessé, le moins généreux"* (B. Constant).

3.

Perhaps you are beginning to perceive how very much this music *improves* me?—*Il faut méditerraniser la musique:* and I have my reasons for this principle ("Beyond Good and Evil," pp. 216 *et seq.*). The return to Nature, health, good spirits, youth, *virtue!*—And yet I was one of the most corrupted Wagnerites.... I was able to take Wagner seriously. Oh, this old magician! what tricks has he not played upon us! The first thing his art places in our hands is a magnifying glass: we look through it, and we no longer trust our own eyes.—Everything grows bigger, *even Wagner grows bigger....* What a clever rattlesnake. Throughout his life he rattled "resignation," "loyalty," and "purity" about our ears, and he retired from the *corrupt* world with a song of praise to chastity! ! —And we believed it all....

—But you will not listen to me? You *prefer* even the *problem* of Wagner to that of Bizet? But neither do I underrate it; it has its charm. The problem of salvation is even a venerable problem. Wagner pondered over nothing so deeply as over salvation: his opera is the opera of salvation. Someone always wants to be saved in his operas,—now

it is a youth; anon it is a maid,—this is *his problem.*—And how lavishly he varies his *leitmotif*! What rare and melancholy modulations! If it were not for Wagner, who would teach us that innocence has a preference for saving interesting sinners? (the case in "Tannhäuser"). Or that even the eternal Jew gets saved and *settled down* when he marries? (the case in the "Flying Dutchman"). Or that corrupted old females prefer to be saved by chaste young men? (the case of Kundry). Or that young hysterics like to be saved by their doctor? (the case in "Lohengrin"). Or that beautiful girls most love to be saved by a knight who also happens to be a Wagnerite? (the case in the "Mastersingers"). Or that even married women also like to be saved by a knight? (the case of Isolde). Or that the venerable Almighty, after having compromised himself morally in all manner of ways, is at last delivered by a free spirit and an immoralist? (the case in the "Ring"). Admire, more especially this last piece of wisdom! Do you understand it? I—take good care not to understand it.... That it is possible to draw yet other lessons from the works above mentioned,—I am much more ready to prove than to dispute. That one may be driven by a Wagnerian ballet to desperation—*and* to virtue! (once again the case in "Tannhäuser"). That not going to bed at the right time may be followed by the worst consequences (once again the case of "Lohengrin"),—That one can never be too sure of the spouse one actually marries (for the third time, the case of "Lohengrin"). "Tristan and Isolde" glorifies the perfect husband who, in a certain case, can ask only one question: "But why have ye not told me this before? Nothing could be simpler than that!" Reply:

> "That I cannot tell thee.
> And what thou askest,
> That wilt thou never learn."

"Lohengrin" contains a solemn ban upon all investigation and questioning. In this way Wagner stood for the Christian concept, "Thou must and shalt *believe!*" It is a crime against the highest and the holiest to be scientific.... The "Flying Dutchman" preaches the sublime doctrine that woman can moor the most erratic soul, or to put it into Wagnerian terms "save" him. Here we venture to ask a question. Supposing that this were actually true, would it therefore be desirable?—What becomes of the "eternal Jew" whom a woman adores and *enchains?* He simply ceases from being eternal; he marries,—that is to say, he concerns us no longer.—Transferred into the realm of reality, the danger for the artist and for the genius—and these are of course the "eternal Jews"—resides in woman: *adoring* women are their ruin. Scarcely any one has sufficient character not to be corrupted—"saved" when he finds himself treated as a God:—he then immediately condescends to woman.—Man is a coward in the face of all that is eternally feminine: and this the girls know.—In many cases of woman's love, and perhaps precisely in the most famous ones, the love is no more than a refined form of *parasitism,* a making one's nest in another's soul and sometimes even in another's flesh —Ah! and how constantly at the cost of the host!

We know the fate of Goethe in old-maidish moralin-corroded Germany. He was always offensive to Germans, he found honest admirers only among. Jewesses. Schiller, "noble" Schiller, who cried flowery words into their ears,—he was a man after their own heart. What did they reproach Goethe with?—with the Mount of Venus, and with having composed certain Venetian epigrams. Even Klopstock preached him a moral sermon; there was a time when Herder was fond of using the word "Priapus" when he spoke of Goethe. Even "Wilhelm Meister" seemed to be only a symptom of decline, of a moral "going to the dogs." The "Menagerie of tame cattle," the worthlessness of the hero in this book, revolted Niebuhr, who finally bursts out in a plaint which *Biterolf*[2] might well have sung: "nothing so easily makes a painful impression as *when a great mind despoils itself of its wings and strives for virtuosity in something greatly inferior, while it renounces more lofty aims."* But the most indignant of all was the cultured woman: all smaller courts in Germany, every kind of "Puritanism" made the sign of the cross at the sight of Goethe, at the thought of the "unclean spirit" in Goethe.—This history was what Wagner set to music. He *saves* Goethe, that goes without saying; but he does so in such a clever way that he also takes the side of the cultured woman.

Goethe gets saved: a prayer saves him, a cultured woman *draws him out of the mire.*

—As to what Goethe would have thought of Wagner?—Goethe once set himself the question, "what danger hangs over all romanticists: the fate of romanticists?" His answer was: "To choke over the rumination of moral and religious absurdities." In short: *Parsifal....* The philosopher writes thereto an epilogue. *Holiness*—the only remaining higher value still seen by the mob or by woman, the horizon of the ideal for all those who are naturally short-sighted. To philosophers, however, this horizon, like every other, is a mere misunderstanding, a sort of slamming of the door in the face of the real beginning of their world,—their danger, their ideal, their desideratum.... In more polite language: *La Philosophie ne suffit pas au grand nombre. Il lui faut la sainteté....*

4.

I shall once more relate the history of the "Ring." This is its proper place. It is also the history of a salvation: except that in this case it is Wagner himself who is saved,—Half his life-time Wagner believed in the *Revolution* as only a Frenchman could have believed in it. He sought it in the runic inscriptions of myths, he thought he had found a typical revolutionary in Siegfried.-"Whence arises all the evil in this world?" Wagner asked himself. From "old contracts": he replied, as all revolutionary ideologists have done. In plain English: from customs, laws, morals, institutions, from all those things upon which the ancient world and ancient society rests. "How can one get rid of the evil in this world? How can one get rid of ancient society?" Only by declaring war against "contracts" (traditions, morality). *This Siegfried does.* He starts early at the game, very

early: his origin itself is already a declaration of war against morality—he is the result of adultery, of incest.... Not the saga, but Wagner himself is the inventor of this radical feature; in this matter he *corrected* the saga.... Siegfried continues as he began: he follows only his first impulse, he flings all tradition, all respect, all *fear* to the winds. Whatever displeases him he strikes down. He tilts irreverently at old god-heads. His principal undertaking, however, is to emancipate woman,—"to deliver Brunnhilda." ... Siegfried and Brunnhilda; the sacrament of free love; the dawn of the golden age; the twilight of the Gods of old morality—*evil is got rid of*....

For a long while Wagner's ship sailed happily along this course. There can be no doubt that along it Wagner sought his highest goal.—What happened? A misfortune. The ship dashed on to a reef; Wagner had run aground. The reef was Schopenhauer's philosophy; Wagner had stuck fast on a *contrary* view of the world. What had he set to music? Optimism? Wagner was ashamed. It was moreover an optimism for which Schopenhauer had devised an evil expression,—*unscrupulous* optimism. He was more than ever ashamed. He reflected for some time; his position seemed desperate.... At last a path of escape seemed gradually to open before him: what if the reef on which he had been wrecked could be interpreted as a goal, as the ulterior motive, as the actual purpose of his journey? To be wrecked here, this was also a goal. *Bene navigavi cum naufragium feci* ... and he translated the "Ring" into Schopenhauerian language. Everything goes wrong, everything goes to wrack and ruin, the new world is just as bad as the old one:—Nonentity, the Indian Circe beckons.... Brunnhilda, who according to the old plan had to retire with a song in honour of free love, consoling the world with the hope of a socialistic Utopia in which "all will be well"; now gets something else to do. She must first study Schopenhauer. She must first versify the fourth book of "The World as Will and Idea." *Wagner was saved*.... Joking apart, this *was* a salvation. The service which Wagner owes to Schopenhauer is incalculable. It was the *philosopher of decadence* who allowed the *artist of decadence* to find himself.—

5.

The artist of decadence. That is the word. And here I begin to be serious. I could not think of looking on approvingly while this *décadent* spoils our health—and music into the bargain. Is Wagner a man at all? Is he not rather a disease? Everything he touches he contaminates. *He has made music sick.*

A typical *décadent* who thinks himself necessary with his corrupted taste, who arrogates to himself a higher taste, who tries to establish his depravity as a law, as progress, as a fulfilment.

And no one guards against it. His powers of seduction attain monstrous proportions, holy incense hangs around him, the misunderstanding concerning him is called the

Gospel,—and he has certainly not converted only the *poor in spirit* to his cause!

I should like to open the window a little. Air! More air!—

The fact that people in Germany deceive themselves concerning Wagner does not surprise me. The reverse would surprise me. The Germans have modelled a Wagner for themselves, whom they can honour: never yet have they been psychologists; they are thankful that they misunderstand. But that people should also deceive themselves concerning Wagner in Paris! Where people are scarcely anything else than psychologists. And in Saint Petersburg! Where things are divined, which even Paris has no idea of. How intimately related must Wagner be to the entire decadence of Europe for her not to have felt that he was decadent! He belongs to it: he is its protagonist, its greatest name.... We bring honour on ourselves by elevating him to the clouds.—For the mere fact that no one guards against him is in itself already a sign of decadence. Instinct is weakened, what ought to be eschewed now attracts. People actually kiss that which plunges them more quickly into the abyss.—Is there any need for an example? One has only to think of the régime which anæmic, or gouty, or diabetic people prescribe for themselves. The definition of a vegetarian: a creature who has need of a corroborating diet. To recognise what is harmful as harmful, to be able to deny oneself what is harmful, is a sign of youth, of vitality. That which is harmful lures the exhausted: cabbage lures the vegetarian. Illness itself can be a stimulus to life: but one must be healthy enough for such a stimulus!—Wagner increases exhaustion: *therefore* he attracts the weak and exhausted to him. Oh, the rattlesnake joy of the old Master precisely because he always saw "the little children" coming unto him!

I place this point of view first and foremost: Wagner's art is diseased. The problems he sets on the stage are all concerned with hysteria; the convulsiveness of his emotions, his over-excited sensitiveness, his taste which demands ever sharper condimentation, his erraticness which he togged out to look like principles, and, last but not least, his choice of heroes and heroines, considered as physiological types (—a hospital ward!—): the whole represents a morbid picture; of this there can be no doubt. *Wagner est une nevrose.* Maybe, that nothing is better known to-day, or in any case the subject of greater study, than the Protean character of degeneration which has disguised itself here, both as an art and as an artist. In Wagner our medical men and physiologists have a most interesting case, or at least a very complete one. Owing to the very fact that nothing is more modern than this thorough morbidness, this dilatoriness and excessive irritability of the nervous machinery, Wagner is the *modern artist par excellence,* the Cagliostro of modernity. All that the world most needs to-day, is combined in the most seductive manner in his art,—the three great stimulants of exhausted people: *brutality, artificiality* and *innocence* (idiocy).

Wagner is a great corrupter of music. With it, he found the means of stimulating tired nerves,—and in this way he made music ill. In the art of spurring exhausted creatures

back into activity, and of recalling half-corpses to life, the inventiveness he shows is of no mean order. He is the master of hypnotic trickery, and he fells the strongest like bullocks. Wagner's *success*—his success with nerves, and therefore with women—converted the whole world of ambitious musicians into disciples of his secret art. And not only the ambitious, but also the *shrewd*.... Only with morbid music can money be made to-day; our big theatres live on Wagner.

6.

—Once more I will venture to indulge in a little levity. Let us suppose that Wagner's *success* could become flesh and blood and assume a human form; that, dressed up as a good-natured musical savant, it could move among budding artists. How do you think it would then be likely to express itself?—

My friends, it would say, let us exchange a word or two in private. It is easier to compose bad music than good music. But what, if apart from this it were also more profitable, more effective, more convincing, more exalting, more secure, more *Wagnerian?... Pulchrum est paucorum hominum.* Bad enough in all conscience! We understand Latin, and perhaps we also understand which side our bread is buttered. Beauty has its drawbacks: we know that. Wherefore beauty then? Why not rather aim at size, at the sublime, the gigantic, that which moves the *masses?*—And to repeat: it is easier to be titanic than to be beautiful; we know that....

We know the masses, we know the theatre. The best of those who assemble there,—German youths, horned Siegfrieds and other Wagnerites, require the sublime, the profound, and the overwhelming. This much still lies within our power. And as for the others who assemble there,—the cultured *crétins,* the *blasé* pigmies, the eternally feminine, the gastrically happy, in short the people—they also require the sublime, the profound, the overwhelming. All these people argue in the same way. "He who overthrows us is strong; he who elevates us is godly; he who makes us wonder vaguely is profound."—Let us make up our mind then, my friends in music: we do want to overthrow them, we do want to elevate them, we do want to make them wonder vaguely. This much still lies within our powers.

In regard to the process of making them wonder: it is here that our notion of "style" finds its starting-point. Above all, no thoughts! Nothing is more compromising than a thought! But the state of mind which *precedes* thought, the labour of the thought still unborn, the promise of future thought, the world as it was before God created it —a recrudescence of chaos.... Chaos makes people wonder ...

In the words of the master: infinity but without melody.

In the second place, with regard to the over-throwing,—this belongs at least in part, to physiology. Let us, in the first place, examine the instruments. A few of them would convince even our intestines (—they *throw open* doors, as Händel would say), others becharm our very marrow. The *colour of the melody is* all-important here; *the melody itself* is of no importance. Let us be precise about *this* point. To what other purpose should we spend our strength? Let us be characteristic in tone even to the point of foolishness! If by means of tones we allow plenty of scope for guessing, this will be put to the credit of our intellects. Let us irritate nerves, let us strike them dead: let us handle thunder and lightning,—that is what overthrows....

But what overthrows best, is *passion.*—We must try and be clear concerning this question of passion. Nothing is cheaper than passion! All the virtues of counterpoint may be dispensed with, there is no need to have learnt anything,—but passion is always within our reach! Beauty is difficult: let us beware of beauty!... And also of *melody!* However much in earnest we may otherwise be about the ideal, let us slander, my friends, let us slander,—let us slander melody! Nothing is more dangerous than a beautiful melody! Nothing is more certain to ruin taste! My friends, if people again set about loving beautiful melodies, we are lost!...

First principle: melody is immoral. *Proof:* "Palestrina." *Application:* "Parsifal." The absence of melody is in itself sanctifying....

And this is the definition of passion. Passion—or the acrobatic feats of ugliness on the tight-rope of enharmonic.—My friends, let us dare to be ugly! Wagner dared it! Let us heave the mud of the most repulsive harmonies undauntedly before us. We must not even spare our hands! Only thus, shall we become *natural*....

And now a last word of advice. Perhaps it covers everything.—*Let us be idealists*/—If not the cleverest, it is at least the wisest thing we can do. In order to elevate men we ourselves must be exalted. Let us wander in the clouds, let us harangue eternity, let us be careful to group great symbols all around us! *Sursum! Bumbum!*— there is no better advice. The "heaving breast" shall be our argument, "beautiful feelings" our advocates. Virtue still carries its point against counterpoint. "How could he who improves us, help being better than we?" man has ever thought thus. Let us therefore improve mankind!—in this way we shall become good (in this way we shall even become "classics"—Schiller became a "classic"). The straining after the base excitement of the senses, after so-called beauty, shattered the nerves of the Italians: let us remain German! Even Mozart's relation to music—Wagner spoke this word of comfort to us—was at bottom frivolous.... Never let us acknowledge that music "may be a recreation," that it may "enliven," that it may "give pleasure." *Never let us give pleasure!*—we shall be lost if people once again think of music hedonistically.... That belongs to the bad eighteenth century.... On the other hand, nothing would be more advisable (between ourselves) than a dose of—*cant, sit venia verbo.* This imparts dignity.—And let us take care to select

the precise moment when it would be fitting to have black looks, to sigh openly, to sigh devoutly, to flaunt grand Christian sympathy before their eyes. "Man is corrupt: who will save him? *what will save him?"* Do not let us reply. We must be on our guard. We must control our ambition, which would bid us found new religions. But no one must doubt that it is *we* who save him, that in *our* music alone salvation is to be found.... (See Wagner's essay, "Religion and Art")

7.

Enough! Enough! I fear that, beneath all my merry jests, you are beginning to recognise the sinister truth only too clearly—the picture of the decline of art, of the decline of the artist. The latter, which is a decline of character, might perhaps be defined provisionally in the following manner: the musician is now becoming an actor, his art is developing ever more and more into a talent for *telling lies.* In a certain chapter of my principal work which bears the title "Concerning the Physiology of Art,"[3] I shall have an opportunity of showing more thoroughly how this transformation of art as a whole into histrionics is just as much a sign of physiological degeneration (or more precisely a form of hysteria), as any other individual corruption, and infirmity peculiar to the art which Wagner inaugurated: for instance the restlessness of its optics, which makes it necessary to change one's attitude to it every second. They understand nothing of Wagner who see in him but a sport of nature, an arbitrary mood, a chapter of accidents. He was not the "defective," "ill-fated," "contradictory" genius that people have declared him to be. Wagner was something *complete,* he was a typical *decadent,* in whom every sign of "free will" was lacking, in whom every feature was necessary. If there is anything at all of interest in Warner, it is the consistency with which a critical physiological condition may convert itself, step by step, conclusion after conclusion, into a method, a form of procedure, a reform of all principles, a crisis in taste.

At this point I shall only stop to consider the question of *style.* How is *decadence* in *literature* characterised? By the fact that in it life no longer animates the whole. Words become predominant and leap right out of the sentence to which they belong, the sentences themselves trespass beyond their bounds, and obscure the sense of the whole page, and the page in its turn gains in vigour at the cost of the whole,—the whole is no longer a whole. But this is the formula for every decadent style: there is always anarchy among the atoms, disaggregation of the will,—in moral terms: "freedom of the individual,"—extended into a political theory: "*equal* rights for all." Life, equal vitality, all the vibration and exuberance of life, driven back into the smallest structure, and the remainder left almost lifeless. Everywhere paralysis, dis-tress, and numbness, or hostility and chaos: both striking one with ever increasing force the higher the forms of organisation are into which one ascends. The whole no longer lives at all: it is composed, reckoned up, artificial, a fictitious thing.

In Wagners case the first thing we notice is an hallucination, not of tones, but of attitudes. Only after he has the latter does he begin to seek the semiotics of tone for them. If we wish to admire him, we should observe him at work here: how he separates and distinguishes, how he arrives at small unities, and how he galvanises them, accentuates them, and brings them into pre-eminence. But in this way he exhausts his strength: the rest is worthless. How paltry, awkward, and amateurish is his manner of "developing," his attempt at combining incompatible parts. His manner in this respect reminds one of two people who even in other ways are not unlike him in style—the brothers Goncourt; one almost feels compassion for so much impotence. That Wagner disguised his inability to create organic forms, under the cloak of a principle, that he should have constructed a "dramatic style" out of what we should call the total inability to create any style whatsoever, is quite in keeping with that daring habit, which stuck to him throughout his life, of setting up a principle wherever capacity failed him. (In this respect he was very different from old Kant, who rejoiced in another form of daring, *i.e.:* whenever a principle failed him, he endowed man with a "capacity" which took its place....) Once more let it be said that Wagner is really only worthy of admiration and love by virtue of his inventiveness in small things, in his elaboration of details,—here one is quite justified in proclaiming him a master of the first rank, as our greatest musical *miniaturist,* who compresses an infinity of meaning and sweetness into the smallest space. His wealth of colour, of chiaroscuro, of the mystery of a dying light, so pampers our senses that afterwards almost every other musician strikes us as being too robust. If people would believe me, they would not form the highest idea of Wagner from that which pleases them in him to-day. All that was only devised for convincing the masses, and people like ourselves recoil from it just as one would recoil from too garish a fresco. What concern have we with the irritating brutality of the overture to the "Tannhäuser"? Or with the Walkyrie Circus? Whatever has become popular in Wagner's art, including that which has become so outside the theatre, is in bad taste and spoils taste. The "Tannhäuser" March seems to me to savour of the Philistine; the overture to the "Flying Dutchman" is much ado about nothing; the prelude to "Lohengrin" was the first, only too insidious, only too successful example of how one can hypnotise with music (—I dislike all music which aspires to nothing higher than to convince the nerves). But apart from the Wagner who paints frescoes and practises magnetism, there is yet another Wagner who hoards small treasures: our greatest melancholic in music, full of side glances, loving speeches, and words of comfort, in which no one ever forestalled him,—the tone-master of melancholy and drowsy happiness.... A lexicon of Wagner's most intimate phrases—a host of short fragments of from five to fifteen bars each, of music which *nobody knows*.... Wagner had the virtue of *décadents,*—pity....

8.

—"Very good! But how can this *décadent* spoil one's taste if perchance one is not a musician, if perchance one is not oneself a *décadent?"*—Conversely! How can one *help* it! *Just* you try it!—You know not what Wagner is: quite a great actor! Does a more profound, a more *ponderous* influence exist on the stage? Just look at these youthlets,—all benumbed, pale, breathless! They are Wagnerites: they know nothing about music,—and yet Wagner gets the mastery of them. Wagner's art presses with the weight of a hundred atmospheres: do but submit, there is nothing else to do.... Wagner the actor is a tyrant, his pathos flings all taste, all resistance, to the winds. —Who else has this persuasive power in his attitudes, who else sees attitudes so clearly before anything else! This holding-of-its-breath in Wagnerian pathos, this disinclination to have done with an intense feeling, this terrifying habit of dwelling on a situation in which every instant almost chokes one.——

Was Wagner a musician at all? In any case he was something else to *a much greater degree*—that is to say, an incomparable *histrio,* the greatest mime, the most astounding theatrical genius that the Germans have ever had, our *scenic artist par excellence.* He belongs to some other sphere than the history of music, with whose really great and genuine figure he must not be confounded. Wagner *and* Beethoven—this is blasphemy—and above all it does not do justice even to Wagner.... As a musician he was no more than what he was as a man: he *became* a musician, he *became* a poet, because the tyrant in him, his actor's genius, drove him to be both. Nothing is known concerning Wagner, so long as his dominating instinct has not been divined.

Wagner was *not* instinctively a musician. And this he proved by the way in which he abandoned all laws and rules, or, in more precise terms, all style in music, in order to make what he wanted with it, *i.e.,* a rhetorical medium for the stage, a medium of expression, a means of accentuating an attitude, a vehicle of suggestion and of the psychologically picturesque. In this department Wagner may well stand as an inventor and an innovator of the first order—he *increased the powers of speech of music to an incalculable degree*—: he is the Victor Hugo of music as language, provided always we allow that under certain circumstances music may be something which is not music, but speech—instrument—*ancilla dramaturgica.* Wagner's music, *not* in the tender care of theatrical taste, which is very tolerant, is simply bad music, perhaps the worst that has ever been composed. When a musician can no longer count up to three, he becomes "dramatic," he becomes "Wagnerian." ...

Wagner almost discovered the magic which can be wrought even now by means of music which is both incoherent and *elementary.* His consciousness of this attains to huge proportions, as does also his instinct to dispense entirely with higher law and *style.* The elementary factors—sound, movement, colour, in short, the whole sensuousness of music—suffice. Wagner never calculates as a musician with a musician's conscience: all he strains after is effect, nothing more than effect. And he

knows what he has to make an effect upon!—In this he is as unhesitating as Schiller was, as any theatrical man must be; he has also the latter's contempt for the world which he brings to its knees before him. A man is an actor when he is ahead of mankind in his possession of this one view, that everything which has to strike people as true, must not be true. This rule was formulated by Talma: it contains the whole psychology of the actor, it also contains—and this we need not doubt—all his morality. Wagner's music is never true.

—But it is supposed to be so: and thus everything is as it should be. As long as we are young, and Wagnerites into the bargain, we regard Wagner as rich, even as the model of a prodigal giver, even as a great landlord in the realm of sound. We admire him in very much the same way as young Frenchmen admire Victor Hugo—that is to say, for his "royal liberality." Later on we admire the one as well as the other for the opposite reason: as masters and paragons in economy, as *prudent* amphitryons. Nobody can equal them in the art of providing a princely board with such a modest outlay.—The Wagnerite, with his credulous stomach, is even sated with the fare which his master conjures up before him. But we others who, in books as in music, desire above all to find *substance,* and who are scarcely satisfied with the mere representation of a banquet, are much worse off. In plain English, Wagner does not give us enough to masticate. His recitative—very little meat, more bones, and plenty of broth—I christened "*alia genovese*": I had no intention of flattering the Genoese with this remark, but rather the *older recitativo,* the *recitativo secco.* And as to Wagnerian *leitmotif,* I fear I lack the necessary culinary understanding for it. If hard pressed, I might say that I regard it perhaps as an ideal toothpick, as an opportunity of ridding one's self of what remains of one's meal. Wagner's "arias" are still left over. But now I shall hold my tongue.

9.

Even in his general sketch of the action, Wagner is above all an actor. The first thing that occurs to him is a scene which is certain to produce a strong effect, a real *actio,*[4] with a basso-relievo of attitudes; an *overwhelming* scene, this he now proceeds to elaborate more deeply, and out of it he draws his characters. The whole of what remains to be done follows of itself, fully in keeping with a technical economy which has no reason to be subtle. It is not Corneille's public that Wagner has to consider, it is merely the nineteenth century. Concerning the "actual requirements of the stage" Wagner would have about the same opinion as any other actor of to-day: a series of powerful scenes, each stronger than the one that preceded it,—and, in between, all kinds of *clever* nonsense. His first concern is to guarantee the effect of his work; he begins with the third act, he *approves* his work according to the quality of its final effect. Guided by this sort of understanding of the stage, there is not much danger of one's creating a drama

unawares. Drama demands *inexorable* logic: but what did Wagner care about logic? Again I say, it was not Corneille's public that he had to consider; but merely Germans! Everybody knows the technical difficulties before which the dramatist often has to summon all his strength and frequently to sweat his blood: the difficulty of making the *plot* seem necessary and the unravelment as well, so that both are conceivable only in a certain way, and so that each may give the impression of freedom (the principle of the smallest expenditure of energy). Now the very last thing that Wagner does is to sweat blood over the plot; and on this and the unravelment he certainly spends the smallest possible amount of energy. Let anybody put one of Wagner's "plots" under the microscope, and I wager that he will be forced to laugh. Nothing is more enlivening than the dilemma in "Tristan," unless it be that in the "Mastersingers." Wagner is *no* dramatist; let nobody be deceived on this point. All he did was to love the word "drama"—he always loved fine words. Nevertheless, in his writings the word "drama" is merely a misunderstanding (—*and* a piece of shrewdness: Wagner always affected superiority in regard to the word "opera"—); just as the word "spirit" is a misunderstanding in the New Testament.—He was not enough of a psychologist for drama; he instinctively avoided a psychological plot—but how?—by always putting idiosyncrasy in its place ... Very modern—eh? Very Parisian! very decadent! ... Incidentally, the *plots* that Wagner knows how to unravel with the help of dramatic inventions, are of quite another kind. For example, let us suppose that Wagner requires a female voice. A whole act without a woman's voice would be impossible! But in this particular instance not one of the heroines happens to be free. What does Wagner do? He emancipates the oldest woman on earth, Erda: "Step up, aged grand-mamma! You have got to sing!" And Erda sings. Wagner's end has been achieved. Thereupon he immediately dismisses the old lady: "Why on earth did you come? Off with you! Kindly go to sleep again!" In short, a scene full of mythological awe, before which the Wagnerite *wonders* all kinds of things....

—"But the substance of Wagner's texts! their mythical substance, their eternal substance:"—Question: how is this substance, this eternal substance tested? The chemical analyst replies: Translate Wagner into the real, into the modern,—let us be even more cruel, and say: into the bourgeois! And what will then become of him?—Between ourselves, I have tried the experiment. Nothing is more entertaining, nothing more worthy of being recommended to a picnic-party, than to discuss Wagner dressed in a more modern garb: for instance Parsifal, as a candidate in divinity, with a public-school education (—the latter, quite indispensable *for pure* foolishness). What *surprises* await one! Would you believe it, that Wagner's heroines one and all, once they have been divested of the heroic husks, are almost Indistinguishable from Mdme. Bovary!—just as one can conceive conversely, of Flaubert's being *well able* to transform all his heroines into Scandinavian or Carthaginian women, and then to offer them to Wagner in this mythologised form as a libretto. Indeed, generally speaking,

Wagner does not seem to have become interested in any other problems than those which engross the little Parisian decadents of to-day. Always five paces away from the hospital! All very modern problems, all problems which are at home *in big cities!* do not doubt it!... Have you noticed (it is in keeping with this association of ideas) that Wagner's heroines never have any children?—They *cannot* have them,... The despair with which Wagner tackled the problem of arranging in some way for Siegfried's birth, betrays how modern his feelings on this point actually were.—"emancipated woman"—but not with any hope of offspring.—And now here is a fact which leaves us speechless: Parsifal is Lohengrin's father! How ever did he do it?—Ought one at this juncture to remember that "chastity works miracles"?...

Wagnerus dixit princeps in castitate auctoritas.

10.

And now just a word *en passant* concerning Wagner's writings: they are among other things a school of *shrewdness.* The system of procedures of which Wagner disposes, might be applied to a hundred other cases,—he that hath ears to hear let him hear. Perhaps I may lay claim to some public acknowledgment, if I put three ox the most valuable of these procedures into a precise form.

Everything that Wagner *cannot* do is bad.

Wagner could do much more than he does; but his strong principles prevent him.

Everything that Wagner *can* do, no one will ever be able to do after him, no one has ever done before him, and no one must ever do after him: Wagner is godly....

These three propositions are the quintessence of Wagner's writings;—the rest is merely —"literature."

—Not every kind of music hitherto has been in need of literature; and it were well, to try and discover the actual reason of this. Is it perhaps that Wagner's music is too difficult to understand? Or did he fear precisely the reverse.—that it was too easy,—that people might *not understand it with sufficient difficulty?*—As a matter of fact, his whole life long, he did nothing but repeat one proposition: that his music did not mean music alone! But something more! Something immeasurably more!... "*Not music alone*"—*no* musician would speak in this way. I repeat, Wagner could not create things as a whole; he had no choice, he was obliged to create things in bits; with "motives," attitudes, formulæ, duplications, and hundreds of repetitions, he remained a rhetorician in music,—and that is why he was at bottom *forced* to press "this means" into the foreground. "Music can never be anything else than a means": this was his theory; but above all it was the only *practice* that lay open to him. No musician however thinks in this way.—Wagner was in need of literature, in order to persuade the whole world to

take his music seriously, profoundly, "because it *meant* an infinity of things"; all his life he was the commentator of the "Idea."—What does Elsa stand for? But without a doubt, Elsa is "the unconscious *mind of the people*" (—"when I realised this, I naturally became a thorough revolutionist"—).

Do not let us forget that, when Hegel and Schelling were misleading the minds of Germany, Wagner was still young: that he guessed, or rather fully grasped, that the only thing which Germans take seriously is—"the idea,"—that is to say, something obscure, uncertain, wonderful; that among Germans lucidity is an objection, logic a refutation. Schopenhauer rigorously pointed out the dishonesty of Hegel's and Schelling's age,—rigorously, but also unjustly; for he himself, the pessimistic old counterfeiter, was in no way more "honest" than his more famous contemporaries. But let us leave morality out of the question, Hegel is a *matter of taste....* And not only of German but of European taste! ... A taste which Wagner understood!—which he felt equal to! which he has immortalised!—All he did was to apply it to music—he invented a style for himself, which might mean an "infinity of things,"—he was *Hegel's* heir.... Music as "Idea."—

And how well Wagner was understood!—The same kind of man who used to gush over Hegel, now gushes over Wagner; in his school they even *write* Hegelian.[5] But he who understood Wagner best, was the German youthlet. The two words "infinity" and "meaning" were sufficient for this: at their sound the youthlet immediately began to feel exceptionally happy. Wagner did *not* conquer these boys with music, but with the "idea":—it is the enigmatical vagueness of his art, its game of hide-and-seek amid a hundred symbols, its polychromy in ideals, which leads and lures the lads. It is Wagner's genius for forming clouds, his sweeps and swoops through the air, his ubiquity and nullibiety—precisely the same qualities with which Hegel led and lured in his time! —Moreover in the presence of Wagner's multifariousness, plenitude and arbitrariness, they seem to themselves justified—"saved." Tremulously they listen while the *great symbols* in his art seem to make themselves heard from out the misty distance, with a gentle roll of thunder, and they are not at all displeased if at times it gets a little grey, gruesome and cold. Are they not one and all, like Wagner himself, on *quite intimate terms* with bad weather, with German weather! Wotan is their God: but Wotan is the God of bad weather.... They are right, how could these German youths—in their present condition,—miss what we others, we *halcyonians,* miss in Wagner? *i.e.: la gaya scienza;* light feet, wit, fire, grave, grand logic, stellar dancing, wanton intellectuality, the vibrating light of the South, the calm sea—perfection....

11.

—I have mentioned the sphere to which Wagner belongs—certainly not to the history of music. What, however, does he mean historically?—*The rise of the actor in music,* a momentous event which not only leads me to think but also to fear.

In a word: "Wagner and Liszt." Never yet have the "uprightness" and "genuineness" of musicians been put to such a dangerous test. It is glaringly obvious: great success, mob success is no longer the achievement of the genuine,—in order to get it a man must be an actor!—Victor Hugo and Richard Wagner—they both prove one and the same thing: that in declining civilisations, wherever the mob is allowed to decide, genuineness becomes superfluous, prejudicial, unfavourable. The actor, alone, can still kindle *great* enthusiasm.—And thus it is *his golden age* which is now dawning—his and that of all those who are in any way related to him. With drums and fifes, Wagner marches at the head of all artists in declamation, in display and virtuosity. He began by convincing the conductors of orchestras, the scene-shifters and stage-singers, not to forget the orchestra:—he "delivered" them from monotony.... The movement that Wagner created has spread even to the land of knowledge: whole sciences pertaining to music are rising slowly, out of centuries of scholasticism. As an example of what I mean, let me point more particularly to *Riemann's* services to rhythmics; he was the first who called attention to the leading idea in punctuation—even for music (unfortunately he did so with a bad word; he called it "phrasing").—All these people, and I say it with gratitude, are the best, the most respectable among Wagner's admirers—they have a perfect right to honour Wagner. The same instinct unites them with one another; in him they recognise their highest type, and since he has inflamed them with his own ardour they feel themselves transformed into power, even into great power. In this quarter, if anywhere, Wagner's influence has really been *beneficent*. Never before has there been so much thinking, willing, and industry in this sphere. Wagner endowed all these artists with a new conscience: what they now exact and *obtain* from themselves, they had never exacted before Wagner's time—before then they had been too modest. Another spirit prevails on the stage since Wagner rules there: the most difficult things are expected, blame is severe, praise very scarce,—the good and the excellent have become the rule. Taste is no longer necessary, nor even is a good voice. Wagner is sung only with ruined voices: this has a more "dramatic" effect. Even talent is out of the question. Expressiveness at all costs, which is what the Wagnerian ideal—the ideal of decadence—demands, is hardly compatible with talent. All that is required for this is virtue—that is to say, training, automatism, "self-denial." Neither taste, voices, nor gifts; Wagner's stage requires but one thing: *Germans!*... The definition of a German: an obedient man with long legs.... There is a deep significance in the fact that the rise of Wagner should have coincided with the rise of the "Empire": both phenomena are a proof of one and the same thing—obedience and long legs.—Never have people been more obedient, never have they been so well ordered about. The conductors of Wagnerian orchestras, more particularly, are worthy of an age, which posterity will one day call, with timid awe, the *classical age of war*. Wagner understood how to command; in this respect, too, he was a great teacher. He commanded as a man who had exercised an inexorable will over himself—as one who had practised lifelong discipline: Wagner was, perhaps, the

greatest example of self-violence in the whole of the history of art (—even Alfieri, who in other respects is his next-of-kin, is outdone by him. The note of a Torinese).

12.

This view, that our actors have become more worthy of respect than heretofore, does not imply that I believe them to have become less dangerous ... But who is in any doubt as to what I want,—as to what the *three requisitions* are concerning which my wrath and my care and love of art, have made me open my mouth on this occasion?

That the stage should not become master of the arts. That the actor should not become the corrupter of the genuine.

That music should not become an art of lying.

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE.

POSTSCRIPT

The gravity of these last words allows me at this point to introduce a few sentences out of an unprinted essay which will at least leave no doubt as to my earnestness in regard to this question. The title of this essay is: "What Wagner has cost us."

One pays dearly for having been a follower of Wagner. Even to-day a vague feeling that this is so, still prevails. Even Wagner's success, his triumph, did not uproot this feeling thoroughly. But formerly it was strong, it was terrible; it was a gloomy hate throughout almost three-quarters of Wagner's life. The resistance which he met with among us Germans cannot be too highly valued or too highly honoured. People guarded themselves against him as against an illness,—not with arguments—it is impossible to refute an illness—, but with obstruction, with mistrust, with repugnance, with loathing, with sombre earnestness, as though he were a great rampant danger. The æsthetes gave themselves away when out of three schools of German philosophy they waged an absurd war against Wagner's principles with "ifs" and "fors"—what did he care about principles, even his own!—The Germans themselves had enough instinctive good sense to dispense with every "if" and "for" in this matter. An instinct is weakened when it becomes conscious: for by becoming conscious it makes itself feeble. If there were any signs that in spite of the universal character of European decadence there was still a modicum of health, still an instinctive premonition of what is harmful and dangerous, residing in the German soul, then it would be precisely this blunt resistance to Wagner which I should least like to see underrated. It does us honour, it gives us some reason to hope: France no longer has such an amount of health at her disposal. The Germans, these *loiterers par excellence,* as history shows, are to-day the most backward among

the civilised nations of Europe: this has its advantages,—for they are thus relatively the youngest.

One pays dearly for having been a follower of Wagner. It is only quite recently that the Germans have overcome a sort of dread of him,—the desire to be rid of him occurred to them again and again.[6] Does anybody remember a very curious occurrence in which, quite unexpectedly towards the end, this old feeling once more manifested itself? It happened at Wagner's funeral. The first Wagner Society, the one in Munich, laid a wreath on his grave with this inscription, which immediately became famous: "Salvation to the Saviour!" Everybody admired the lofty inspiration which had dictated this inscription, as also the taste which seemed to be the privilege of the followers of Wagner. Many also, however (it was singular enough), made this slight alteration in it: "Salvation *from* the Saviour" —People began to breathe again.—

One pays dearly for having been a follower of Wagner. Let us try to estimate the influence of this worship upon culture. Whom did this movement press to the front? What did it make ever more and more pre-eminent?—In the first place the layman's arrogance, the arrogance of the art-maniac. Now these people are organising societies, they wish to make their taste prevail, they even wish to pose as judges *in rebus musicis et musicantibus*. Secondly: an ever increasing indifference towards severe, noble and conscientious schooling in the service of art; and in its place the belief in genius, or in plain English, cheeky dilettantism (—the formula for this is to be found in the *Mastersingers)*. Thirdly, and this is the worst of all: *Theatrocracy*—, the craziness of a belief in the pre-eminence of the theatre, in the right of the theatre to rule supreme over the arts, over Art in general.... But this should be shouted into the face of Wagnerites a hundred times over: that the theatre is something lower than art, something secondary, something coarsened, above all something suitably distorted and falsified for the mob. In this respect Wagner altered nothing: Bayreuth is grand Opera—and not even good opera.... The stage is a form of Demolatry in the realm of taste, the stage is an insurrection of the mob, a *plebiscite* against good taste.... The case of Wagner proves this fact: he captivated the masses—he depraved taste, he even perverted our taste for opera!—

One pays dearly for having been a follower of Wagner. What has Wagner-worship made out of spirit? Does Wagner liberate the spirit? To him belong that ambiguity and equivocation and all other qualities which can convince the uncertain without making them conscious of why they have been convinced. In this sense Wagner is a seducer on a grand scale. There is nothing exhausted, nothing effete, nothing dangerous to life, nothing that slanders the world in the realm of spirit, which has not secretly found shelter in his art; he conceals the blackest obscurantism in the luminous orbs of the ideal. He flatters every nihilistic (Buddhistic) instinct and togs it out in music; he flatters every form of Christianity, every religious expression of decadence. He that hath

ears to hear let him hear: everything that has ever grown out of the soil of impoverished life, the whole counterfeit coinage of the transcendental and of a Beyond found its most sublime advocate in Wagner's art, not in formulæ (Wagner is too clever to use formulæ), but in the persuasion of the senses which in their turn makes the spirit weary and morbid. Music in the form of Circe ... in this respect his last work is his greatest masterpiece. In the art of seduction "Parsifal" will for ever maintain its rank as a stroke of genius.... I admire this work. I would fain have composed it myself. Wagner was never better inspired than towards the end. The subtlety with which beauty and disease are united here, reaches such a height, that it casts so to speak a shadow upon all Wagner's earlier achievements: it seems too bright, too healthy. Do ye understand this? Health and brightness acting like a shadow? Almost like an objection?... To this extent are we already pure fools.... Never was their a greater Master in heavy hieratic perfumes—Never on earth has there been such a connoisseur of paltry infinities, of all that thrills, of extravagant excesses, of all the feminism from out the vocabulary of happiness! My friends, do but drink the philtres of this art! Nowhere will ye find a more pleasant method of enervating your spirit, of forgetting your manliness in the shade of a rosebush.... Ah, this old magician, mightiest of Klingsors; how he wages war against us with his art, against us free spirits! How he appeals to every form of cowardice of the modern soul with his charming girlish notes! There never was such a *mortal hatred* of knowledge! One must be a very cynic in order to resist seduction here. One must be able to bite in order to resist worshipping at this shrine. Very well, old seducer! The cynic cautions you—*cave canem*....

One pays dearly for having been a follower of Wagner. I contemplate the youthlets who have long been exposed to his infection. The first relatively innocuous effect of it is the corruption of their taste. Wagner acts like chronic recourse to the bottle. He stultifies, he befouls the stomach. His specific effect: degeneration of the feeling for rhythm. What the Wagnerite calls rhythmical is what I call, to use a Greek metaphor, "stirring a swamp." Much more dangerous than all this, however, is the corruption of ideas. The youthlet becomes a moon-calf, an "idealist." He stands above science, and in this respect he has reached the master's heights. On the other hand, he assumes the airs of a philosopher; he writes for the *Bayreuth Journal;* he solves all problems in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Master. But the most ghastly thing of all is the deterioration of the nerves. Let any one wander through a large city at night, in all directions he will hear people doing violence to instruments with solemn rage and fury, a wild uproar breaks out at intervals. What is happening? It is the disciples of Wagner in the act of worshipping him.... Bayreuth is another word for a Hydro. A typical telegram from Bayreuth would read *bereits bereut* (I already repent). Wagner is bad for young men; he is fatal for women. What medically speaking is a female Wagnerite? It seems to me that a doctor could not be too serious in putting this alternative of conscience to young women: either one thing or the other. But they have already made their choice. You

cannot serve two Masters when one of these is Wagner. Wagner redeemed woman; and in return woman built Bayreuth for him. Every sacrifice, every surrender: there was nothing that they were not prepared to give him. Woman impoverishes herself in favour of the Master, she becomes quite touching, she stands naked before him. The female Wagnerite, the most attractive equivocality that exists to-day: she is the incarnation of Wagner's cause: his cause triumphs with her as its symbol.... Ah, this old robber! He robs our young men: he even robs our women as well, and drags them to his cell.... Ah, this old Minotaur! What has he not already cost us? Every year processions of the finest young men and maidens are led into his labyrinth that he may swallow them up, every year the whole of Europe cries out "Away to Crete! Away to Crete!" ...

SECOND POSTSCRIPT

It seems to me that my letter is open to some misunderstanding. On certain faces I see the expression of gratitude; I even hear modest but merry laughter. I prefer to be understood here as in other things. But since a certain animal, *the worm of* Empire, the famous *Rhinoxera,* has become lodged in the vineyards of the German spirit, nobody any longer understands a word I say. The *Kreuz-Zeitung* has brought this home to me, not to speak of the *Litterarisches Centralblatt* I have given the Germans the deepest books that they have ever possessed—a sufficient reason for their not having understood a word of them.... If in this essay I declare war against Wagner—and incidentally against a certain form of German taste, if I seem to use strong language about the cretinism of Bayreuth, it must not be supposed that I am in the least anxious to glorify any other musician. Other musicians are not to be considered by the side of Wagner. Things are generally bad. Decay is universal. Disease lies at the very root of things. If Wagner's name represents the ruin of music, just as Bernini's stands for the ruin of sculpture, he is not on that account its cause. All he did was to accelerate the fall,—though we are quite prepared to admit that he did it in a way which makes one recoil with horror from this almost instantaneous decline and fall to the depths. He possessed the ingenuousness of decadence: this constituted his superiority. He believed in it. He did not halt before any of its logical consequences. The others hesitated—that is their distinction. They have no other. What is common to both Wagner and "the others" consists in this: the decline of all organising power; the abuse of traditional means, without the capacity or the aim that would justify this. The counterfeit imitation of grand forms, for which nobody nowadays is strong, proud, self-reliant and healthy enough; excessive vitality in small details; passion at all costs; refinement as an expression of impoverished life, ever more nerves in the place of muscle. I know only one musician who to-day would be able to compose an overture as an organic whole: and nobody else knows him.[7] He who is famous now, does not write better music than Wagner, but only less characteristic, less definite music:—less definite, because half measures, even in decadence, cannot stand by the side of completeness. But Wagner was complete;

Wagner represented thorough corruption; Wagner has had the courage, the will, and the conviction for corruption. What does Johannes Brahms matter? ... It was his good fortune to be misunderstood by Germany he was taken to be an antagonist of Wagner—people required an antagonist!—But he did not write necessary music, above all he wrote too much music!—When one is not rich one should at least have enough pride to be poor!... The sympathy which here and there was meted out to Brahms, apart from party interests and party misunderstandings, was for a long time a riddle to me: until one day through an accident, almost, I discovered that he affected a particular type of man. He has the melancholy of impotence. His creations are not the result of plenitude, he thirsts after abundance. Apart from what he plagiarises, from what he borrows from ancient or exotically modern styles—he is a master in the art of copying,—there remains as his most individual quality a *longing*.... And this is what the dissatisfied of all kinds, and all those who yearn, divine in him. He is much too little of a personality, too little of a central figure.... The "impersonal," those who are not self-centred, love him for this. He is especially the musician of a species of dissatisfied women. Fifty steps further on, and we find the female Wagnerite—just as we find Wagner himself fifty paces ahead of Brahms.—The female Wagnerite is a more definite, a more interesting, and above all, a more attractive type. Brahms is touching so long as he dreams or mourns over himself in private—in this respect he is modern;—he becomes cold, we no longer feel at one with him when he poses as the child of the classics. ... People like to call Brahms Beethoven's heir: I know of no more cautious euphemism.—All that which to-day makes a claim to being the grand style in music is on precisely that account either false to us or false to itself. This alternative is suspicious enough: in itself it contains a casuistic question concerning the value of the two cases. The instinct of the majority protests against the alternative; "false to us"—they do not wish to be cheated;—and I myself would certainly always prefer this type to the other ("False to itself"). This is *my* taste.—Expressed more clearly for the sake of the "poor in spirit" it amounts to this: Brahms *or* Wagner.... Brahms is *not* an actor.—A very great part of other musicians may be summed up in the concept Brahms.—I do not wish to say anything about the clever apes of Wagner, as for instance Goldmark: when one has "The Queen of Sheba" to one's name, one belongs to a menagerie,—one ought to put oneself on show.—Nowadays all things that can be done well and even with a master hand are small. In this department alone is honesty still possible. Nothing, however, can cure music as a whole of its chief fault, of its fate, which is to be the expression of general physiological contradiction,—which is, in fact, to be modern.

The best instruction, the most conscientious schooling, the most thorough familiarity, yea, and even isolation, with the Old Masters,—all this only acts as a palliative, or, more strictly speaking, has but an illusory effect, because the first condition of the right thing is no longer in our bodies; whether this first condition be the strong race of a Händel or the overflowing animal spirits of a Rossini. Not everyone has the right to

every teacher: and this holds good of whole epochs.—In itself it is not impossible that there are still remains of stronger natures, typical unadapted men, somewhere in Europe: from this quarter the advent of a somewhat belated form of beauty and perfection, even in music, might still be hoped for. But the most that we can expect to see are exceptional cases. From the rule, that corruption is paramount, that corruption is a fatality,—not even a God can save music.

EPILOGUE

And now let us take breath and withdraw a moment from this narrow world which necessarily must be narrow, because we have to make enquiries relative to the value of *persons.* A philosopher feels that he wants to wash his hands after he has concerned himself so long with the "Case of Wagner." I shall now give my notion of what is *modern.* According to the measure of energy of every age, there is also a standard that determines which virtues shall be allowed and which forbidden. The age either has the virtues of *ascending* life, in which case it resists the virtues of degeneration with all its deepest instincts. Or it is in itself an age of degeneration, in which case it requires the virtues of declining life,—in which case it hates everything that justifies itself, solely as being the outcome of a plenitude, or a superabundance of strength. Æsthetic is inextricably bound up with these biological principles: there is decadent æsthetic, and *classical* æsthetic,—"Beauty in itself" is just as much a chimera as any other kind of idealism.—Within the narrow sphere of the so-called moral values, no greater antithesis could be found than that of *master-morality* and the morality of *Christian* valuations: the latter having grown out of a thoroughly morbid soil. (—The gospels present us with the same physiological types, as do the novels of Dostoiewsky), the master-morality ("Roman," "pagan," "classical," "Renaissance"), on the other hand, being the symbolic speech of well-constitutedness, of *ascending* life, and of the Will to Power as a vital principle. Master-morality *affirms* just as instinctively as Christian morality *denies* ("God," "Beyond," "self-denial,"—all of them negations). The first reflects its plenitude upon things,—it transfigures, it embellishes, it *rationalises* the world,—the latter impoverishes, bleaches, mars the value of things; it *suppresses* the world. "World" is a Christian term of abuse. These antithetical forms in the optics of values, are *both* necessary: they are different points of view which cannot be circumvented either with arguments or counter-arguments. One cannot refute Christianity: it is impossible to refute a diseased eyesight. That people should have combated pessimism as if it had been a philosophy, was the very acme of learned stupidity. The concepts "true" and "untrue" do not seem to me to have any sense in optics.—That, alone, which has to be guarded against is the falsity, the instinctive duplicity which *would fain* regard this antithesis as no antithesis at all: just as Wagner did,—and his mastery in this kind of falseness was of no mean order. To cast side-long glances at master-morality, at *noble* morality (—Icelandic saga is perhaps the greatest documentary evidence of these

values), and at the same time to have the opposite teaching, the "gospel of the lowly," the doctrine of the *need* of salvation, on one's lips!... Incidentally, I admire the modesty of Christians who go to Bayreuth. As for myself, I could *not* endure to hear the sound of certain words on Wagner's lips. There are some concepts which are too good for Bayreuth.... What? Christianity adjusted for female Wagnerites, perhaps *by* female Wagnerites—for, in his latter days Wagner was thoroughly *feminini generis—?* Again I say, the Christians of to-day are too modest for me,... If Wagner were a Christian, then Liszt was perhaps a Father of the Church!—The need of *salvation,* the quintessence of all Christian needs, has nothing in common with such clowns: it is the most straightforward expression of decadence, it is the most convincing and most painful affirmation of decadence, in sublime symbols and practices. The Christian wishes *to be rid* of himself. *Le mot est toujours haïssable.* Noble morality, master-morality, on the other hand, is rooted in a triumphant saying of yea to *one's self,*—it is the self-affirmation and self-glorification of life; it also requires sublime symbols and practices; but only "because its heart is too full." The whole of beautiful art and of great art belongs here: their common essence is gratitude. But we must allow it a certain instinctive repugnance *to décadents,* and a scorn and horror of the latter's symbolism: such things almost prove it. The noble Romans considered Christianity as a *fœda superstitio*: let me call to your minds the feelings which the last German of noble taste —Goethe—had in regard to the cross. It is idle to look for more valuable, more *necessary* contrasts....[8]

But the kind of falsity which is characteristic of the Bayreuthians is not exceptional to-day. We all know the hybrid concept of the Christian gentleman. This *innocence* in contradiction, this "clean conscience" in falsehood, is rather modern *par excellence,* with it modernity is almost defined. Biologically, modern man represents a *contradiction of values,* he sits between two stools, he says yea and nay in one breath. No wonder that it is precisely in our age that falseness itself became flesh and blood, and even genius! No wonder *Wagner* dwelt amongst us! It was not without reason that I called Wagner the Cagliostro of modernity.... But all of us, though we do not know it, involuntarily have values, words, formulæ, and morals in our bodies, which are quite *antagonistic* in their origin—regarded from a physiological standpoint, we are *false*.... How would a *diagnosis of the modern soul* begin? With a determined incision into this agglomeration of contradictory instincts, with the total suppression of its antagonistic values, with vivisection applied to its most *instructive* case. To philosophers the "Case of Wagner" is a *windfall*—this essay, as you observe, was inspired by gratitude.

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[1] Senta is the heroine in the "Flying Dutchman,"—Tr.

[2] A character in "Tannhäuser."—*Tr.*

[3] See "The Will to Power," vol. ii, authorised English edition.—*Tr.*

[4] *Note.*—It was a real disaster for æsthetics when the word drama got to be translated by "action." Wagner is not the only culprit here; the whole world does the same;—even the philologists who ought to know better. What ancient drama had in view was *grand pathetic scenes,*—it even excluded action (or placed it *before* the piece or *behind* the scenes). The word drama is of Doric origin, and according to the usage of the Dorian language it meant "event," "history,"—both words in a hieratic sense. The oldest drama represented local legends, "sacred history," upon which the foundation of the cult rested (—thus it was not "action," but fatality: dran in Doric has nothing to do with action).

[5] Hegel and his school wrote notoriously obscure German. —*Tr.*

[6] Was Wagner a German at all? There are reasons enough for putting this question. It is difficult to find a single German trait in his character. Great learner that he was, he naturally imitated a great deal that was German—but that is all. His very soul contradicts everything which hitherto has been regarded as German; not to mention German musicians!—His father was an actor of the name of Geyer.... That which has been popularised hitherto as "Wagner's life" is *fable convenue* if not something worse. I confess my doubts on any point which is vouched for by Wagner alone. He was not proud enough to be able to suffer the truth about himself. Nobody had less pride than he. Like Victor Hugo he remained true to himself even in his biography,—he remained an actor.

[7] This undoubtedly refers to Nietzsche's only disciple and friend, Peter Gast.—*Tr.*

[8] My "Genealogy of Morals" contains the best exposition of the antithesis *"noble morality"* and *"Christian morality"*; a more decisive turning point in the history of religious and moral science does not perhaps exist. This book, which is a touchstone by which I can discover who are my peers, rejoices in being accessible only to the most elevated and most severe minds: the others have not the ears to hear me. One must have one's passion in things, *wherein* no one has passion nowadays.

NIETZSCHE *CONTRA* WAGNER

THE BRIEF OF A PSYCHOLOGIST

By

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

PREFACE

The following chapters have been selected from past works of mine, and not without care. Some of them date back as far as 1877. Here and there, of course, they will be found to have been made a little more intelligible, but above all, more brief. Read consecutively, they can leave no one in any doubt, either concerning myself, or

concerning Wagner: we are antipodes. The reader will come to other conclusions, too, in his perusal of these pages: for instance, that this is an essay for psychologists and *not* for Germans.... I have my readers everywhere, in Vienna, St Petersburg, Copenhagen, Stockholm, Paris, and New York—but *I have none* in Europe's Flat-land—Germany.... And I might even have something to say to Italians whom I love just as much as I ... *Quousque tandem, Crispi* ... Triple alliance: a people can only conclude a *misalliance* with the "Empire." ...

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE.

TURIN, *Christmas* 1888.

NIETZSCHE *CONTRA* WAGNER

WHEREIN I ADMIRE WAGNER.

I believe that artists very often do not know what they are best able to do. They are much too vain. Their minds are directed to something prouder than merely to appear like little plants, which, with freshness, rareness, and beauty, know how to sprout from their soil with real perfection. The ultimate goodness of their own garden and vineyard is superciliously under-estimated by them, and their love and their insight are not of the same quality. Here is a musician who is a greater master than anyone else in the discovering of tones, peculiar to suffering, oppressed, and tormented souls, who can endow even dumb misery with speech. Nobody can approach him in the colours of late autumn, in the indescribably touching joy of a last, a very last, and all too short gladness; he knows of a chord which expresses those secret and weird midnight hours of the soul, when cause and effect seem to have fallen asunder, and at every moment something may spring out of nonentity. He is happiest of all when creating from out the nethermost depths of human happiness, and, so to speak, from out man's empty bumper, in which the bitterest and most repulsive drops have mingled with the sweetest for good or evil at last. He knows that weary shuffling along of the soul which is no longer able either to spring or to fly, nay, which is no longer able to walk; he has the modest glance of concealed suffering, of understanding without comfort, of leave-taking without word or sign; verily as the Orpheus of all secret misery he is greater than anyone, and many a thing was introduced into art for the first time by him, which hitherto had not been given expression, had not even been thought worthy of art—the cynical revolts, for instance, of which only the greatest sufferer is capable, also many a small and quite microscopical feature of the soul, as it were the scales of its amphibious nature—yes indeed, he is the master of everything very small. But this he refuses to be! His tastes are much more in love with vast walls and with daring frescoes! ... He does not see that

his spirit has another desire and bent—a totally different outlook—that it prefers to squat peacefully in the corners of broken-down houses: concealed in this way, and hidden even from himself, he paints his really great masterpieces, all of which are very short, often only one bar in length—there, only, does he become quite good, great and perfect, perhaps there alone.—Wagner is one who has suffered much—and this elevates him above other musicians.—I admire Wagner wherever he sets *himself* to music.—

WHEREIN I RAISE OBJECTIONS.

With all this I do not wish to imply that I regard this music as healthy, and least of all in those places where it speaks of Wagner himself. My objections to Wagner's music are physiological objections. Why should I therefore begin by clothing them in æsthetic formulæ? Æsthetic is indeed nothing more than applied physiology.—The fact I bring forward, my *"petit fait vrai"* is that I can no longer breathe with ease when this music begins to have its effect upon me; that my foot immediately begins to feel indignant at it and rebels: for what it needs is time, dance, march: even the young German Kaiser could not march to Wagner's Imperial March,—what my foot demands in the first place from music is that ecstasy which lies in good walking, stepping and dancing. But do not my stomach, my heart, my circulation also protest? Are not my intestines also troubled? And do I not become hoarse unawares? ... in order to listen to Wagner I require Géraudel's Pastilles.... And then I ask myself, what is it that my whole body must have from music in general? for there is no such thing as a soul.... I believe it must have relief: as if all animal functions were accelerated by means of light, bold, unfettered, self-reliant rhythms; as if brazen and leaden life could lose its weight by means of delicate and smooth melodies. My melancholy would fain rest its head in the haunts and abysses of perfection: for this reason I need music. But Wagner makes one ill—What do I care about the theatre? What do I care about the spasms of its moral ecstasies in which the mob—and who is not the mob to-day?—rejoices? What do I care about the whole pantomimic hocus-pocus of the actor? You are beginning to see that I am essentially anti-theatrical at heart. For the stage, this mob art *par excellence,* my soul has that deepest scorn felt by every artist to-day. With a stage success a man sinks to such an extent in my esteem as to drop out of sight; failure in this quarter makes me prick my ears, makes me begin to pay attention. But this was not so with Wagner; next to the Wagner who created the most unique music that has ever existed there was the Wagner who was essentially a man of the stage, an actor, the most enthusiastic mimomaniac that has perhaps existed on earth, even as a musician. And let it be said *en passant* that if Wagner's theory was "drama is the object, music is only a means"—his practice was from beginning to end, the attitude is the end, drama and even music can never be anything else than means." Music as the manner of accentuating, of strengthening, and deepening dramatic poses and all things which please the senses of the actor; and Wagnerian drama only an opportunity for a host of interesting attitudes!—Alongside of

all other instincts he had the dictatorial instinct of a great actor in everything: and, as I have already said, as a musician also.—On one occasion, and not without trouble, I made this clear to a Wagnerite *pur sang,*—clearness and a Wagnerite! I won't say another word. There were reasons for adding; "For heaven's sake, be a little more true unto yourself! We are not in Bayreuth now. In Bayreuth people are only upright in the mass; the individual lies, he even lies to himself. One leaves oneself at home when one goes to Bayreuth, one gives up all right to one's own tongue and choice, to one's own taste and even to one's own courage, one knows these things no longer as one is wont to have them and practise them before God and the world and between one's own four walls. In the theatre no one brings the finest senses of his art with him, and least of all the artist who works for the theatre,—for here loneliness is lacking; everything perfect does not suffer a witness.... In the theatre one becomes mob, herd, woman, Pharisee, electing cattle, patron, idiot—Wagnerite: there, the most personal conscience is bound to submit to the levelling charm of the great multitude, there the neighbour rules, there one *becomes* a neighbour."

WAGNER AS A DANGER.

1.

The aim after which more modern music is striving, which is now given the strong but obscure name of "unending melody," can be clearly understood by comparing it to one's feelings on entering the sea. Gradually one loses one's footing and one ultimately abandons oneself to the mercy or fury of the elements: one has to swim. In the solemn, or fiery, swinging movement, first slow and then quick, of old music—one had to do something quite different; one had to dance. The measure which was required for this and the control of certain balanced degrees of time and energy, forced the soul of the listener to continual sobriety of thought.—Upon the counterplay of the cooler currents of air which came from this sobriety, and from the warmer breath of enthusiasm, the charm of all good music rested—Richard Wagner wanted another kind of movement,—he overthrew the physiological first principle of all music before his time. It was no longer a matter of walking or dancing,—we must swim, we must hover.... This perhaps decides the whole matter. "Unending melody" really wants to break all the symmetry of time and strength; it actually scorns these things—Its wealth of invention resides precisely in what to an older ear sounds like rhythmic paradox and abuse. From the imitation or the prevalence of such a taste there would arise a danger for music—so great that we can imagine none greater—the complete degeneration of the feeling for rhythm, *chaos* in the place of rhythm.... The danger reaches its climax when such music cleaves ever more closely to naturalistic play-acting and pantomime, which governed by no laws of form, aim at effect and nothing more.... Expressiveness at all costs and music a servant, a slave to attitudes—this is the end....

What? would it really be the first virtue of a performance (as performing musical artists now seem to believe), under all circumstances to attain to a *haut-relief* which cannot be surpassed? If this were applied to Mozart, for instance, would it not be a real sin against Mozart's spirit,—Mozart's cheerful, enthusiastic, delightful and loving spirit? He who fortunately was no German, and whose seriousness is a charming and golden seriousness and not by any means that of a German clodhopper.... Not to speak of the earnestness of the "marble statue." ... But you seem to think that all music is the music of the "marble statue"? —that all music should, so to speak, spring out of the wall and shake the listener to his very bowels? ... Only thus could music have any effect! But on whom would the effect be made? Upon something on which a noble artist ought never to deign to act,—upon the mob, upon the immature! upon the blasts! upon the diseased! upon idiots! upon *Wagnerites*!...

A MUSIC WITHOUT A FUTURE.

Of all the arts which succeed in growing on the soil of a particular culture, music is the last plant to appear; maybe because it is the one most dependent upon our innermost feelings, and therefore the last to come to the surface—at a time when the culture to which it belongs is in its autumn season and beginning to fade. It was only in the art of the Dutch masters that the spirit of mediæval Christianity found its expression—, its architecture of sound is the youngest, but genuine and legitimate, sister of the Gothic. It was only in Handel's music that the best in Luther and in those like him found its voice, the Judeo-heroic trait which gave the Reformation a touch of greatness—the Old Testament, *not* the New, become music. It was left to Mozart, to pour out the epoch of Louis XIV., and of the art of Racine and Claude Lorrain, in *ringing* gold; only in Beethoven's and Rossini's music did the Eighteenth Century sing itself out—the century of enthusiasm, broken ideals, and *fleeting joy.* All real and original music is a swan song.—Even our last form of music, despite its prevalence and its will to prevail, has perhaps only a short time to live: for it sprouted from a soil which was in the throes of a rapid subsidence,—of a culture which will soon be *submerged.* A certain Catholicism of feeling, and a predilection for some ancient indigenous (so-called national) ideals and eccentricities, was its first condition. Wagner's appropriation of old sagas and songs, in which scholarly prejudice taught us *to* see something German *par excellence* —now we laugh at it all, the resurrection of these Scandinavian monsters with a thirst for ecstatic sensuality and spiritualisation—the whole of this taking and giving on Wagner's part, in the matter of subjects, characters, passions, and nerves, would also give unmistakable expression to the *spirit of his music* provided that this music, like any other, did not know how to speak about itself save ambiguously: for *musica is a woman....* We must not let ourselves be misled concerning this state of things, by the fact

that at this very moment we are living in a reaction, *in the heart itself* of a reaction. The age of international wars, of ultramontane martyrdom, in fact, the whole interlude-character which typifies the present condition of Europe, may indeed help an art like Wagner's to sudden glory, without, however, in the least ensuring its *future prosperity.* The Germans themselves have no future....

WE ANTIPODES.

Perhaps a few people, or at least my friends, will remember that I made my first plunge into life armed with some errors and some exaggerations, but that, in any case, I began with *hope* in my heart. In the philosophical pessimism of the nineteenth century, I recognised—who knows by what by-paths of personal experience—the symptom of a higher power of thought, a more triumphant plenitude of life, than had manifested itself hitherto in the philosophies of Hume, Kant and Hegel!—I regarded *tragic* knowledge as the most beautiful luxury of our culture, as its most precious, most noble, most dangerous kind of prodigality; but, nevertheless, in view of its overflowing wealth, as a justifiable *luxury.* In the same way, I began by interpreting Wagner's music as the expression of a Dionysian powerfulness of soul. In it I thought I heard the earthquake by means of which a primeval life-force, which had been constrained for ages, was seeking at last to burst its bonds, quite indifferent to how much of that which nowadays calls itself culture, would thereby be shaken to ruins. You see how I misinterpreted, you see also, what I *bestowed* upon Wagner and Schopenhauer—myself.... Every art and every philosophy may be regarded either as a cure or as a stimulant to ascending or declining life: they always presuppose suffering and sufferers. But there are two kinds of sufferers:—those that suffer from *overflowing vitality,* who need Dionysian art and require a tragic insight into, and a tragic outlook upon, the phenomenon life,—and there are those who suffer from *reduced* vitality, and who crave for repose, quietness, calm seas, or else the intoxication, the spasm, the bewilderment which art and philosophy provide. Revenge upon life itself—this is the most voluptuous form of intoxication for such indigent souls!... Now Wagner responds quite as well as Schopenhauer to the twofold cravings of these people,—they both deny life, they both slander it but precisely on this account they are my antipodes.—The richest creature, brimming over with vitality,—the Dionysian God and man, may not only allow himself to gaze upon the horrible and the questionable; but he can also lend his hand to the terrible deed, and can indulge in all the luxury of destruction, disaggregation, and negation,—in him evil, purposelessness and ugliness, seem just as allowable as they are in nature—because of his bursting plenitude of creative and rejuvenating powers, which are able to convert every desert into a luxurious land of plenty. Conversely, it is the greatest sufferer and pauper in vitality, who is most in need of mildness, peace and goodness—that which to-day is called humaneness—in thought as well as in action, and possibly of a God whose speciality is to be a God of the sick, a Saviour, and also of logic or the abstract

intelligibility of existence even for idiots (—the typical "free-spirits," like the idealists, and "beautiful souls," are *décadents*—); in short, of a warm, danger-tight, and narrow confinement, between optimistic horizons which would allow of stultification.... And thus very gradually, I began to understand Epicurus, the opposite of a Dionysian Greek; and also the Christian who in fact is only a kind of Epicurean, and who, with his belief that "faith saves," carries the principle of Hedonism *as far as possible*—far beyond all intellectual honesty.... If I am ahead of all other psychologists in anything, it is in this fact that my eyes are more keen for tracing those most difficult and most captious of all deductions, in which the largest number of mistakes have been made,—the deduction which makes one infer something concerning the author from his work, something concerning the doer from his deed, something concerning the idealist from the need which produced this ideal, and something concerning the imperious *craving* which stands at the back of all thinking and valuing.—In regard to all artists of what kind soever, I shall now avail myself of this radical distinction: does the creative power in this case arise from a loathing of life, or from an excessive *plenitude* of life? In Goethe, for instance, an overflow of vitality was creative, in Flaubert—hate: Flaubert, a new edition of Pascal, but as an artist with this instinctive belief at heart: "*Flaubert est toujours haïssable, l'homme n'est rien, l'œuvre est tout*...." He tortured himself when he wrote, just as Pascal tortured himself when he thought—the feelings of both were inclined to be "non-egoistic." ... "Disinterestedness"—the principle of decadence, the will to nonentity in art as well as in morality.

WHERE WAGNER IS AT HOME.

Even at the present day, France is still the refuge of the most intellectual and refined culture in Europe, it remains the high school of taste: but one must know where to find this France of taste. The *North-German Gazette,* for instance, or who-ever expresses his sentiments in that paper, thinks that the French are "barbarians,"—as for me, if I had to find the *blackest* spot on earth, where slaves still required to be liberated, I should turn in the direction of Northern Germany.... But those who form part of *that select* France take very good care to *conceal themselves*: they are a small body of men, and there may be some among them who do not stand on very firm legs—a few may be fatalists, hypochondriacs, invalids; others may be enervated, and artificial,—such are those who would fain be artistic,—but all the loftiness and delicacy which still remains to this world, is in their possession. In this France of intellect, which is also the France of pessimism, Schopenhauer is already much more at home than he ever was in Germany; his principal work has already been translated twice, and the second time so excellently that now I prefer to read Schopenhauer in French (—he was an *accident* among Germans, just as I am—the Germans have no fingers wherewith to grasp us; they haven't any fingers at all,—but only claws). And I do not mention Heine—l'*adorable Heine,* as they say in Paris—who long since has passed into the flesh and blood of the

more profound and more soulful of French lyricists. How could the horned cattle of Germany know how to deal with the *délicatesses* of such a nature!—And as to Richard Wagner, it is obvious, it is even glaringly obvious, that Paris is the very *soil* for him: the more French music adapts itself to the needs of *l'âme moderne,* the more Wagnerian it will become,—it is far enough advanced in this direction already.—In this respect one should not allow one's self to be misled by Wagner himself—it was simply dis-graceful on Wagner's part to scoff at Paris, as he did, in its agony in 1871.... In spite of it all, in Germany Wagner is only a misapprehension: who could be more incapable of understanding anything about Wagner than the Kaiser, for instance?—To everybody familiar with the movement of European culture, this fact, however, is certain, that French romanticism and Richard Wagner are most intimately related. All dominated by literature, up to their very eyes and ears—the first European artists with a *universal literary* culture,—most of them writers, poets, mediators and minglers of the senses and the arts, all fanatics in *expression,* great discoverers in the realm of the sublime as also of the ugly and the gruesome, and still greater discoverers in passion, in working for effect, in the art of dressing their windows,—all possessing talent far above their genius,—virtuosos to their backbone, knowing of secret passages to all that seduces, lures, constrains or overthrows; born enemies of logic and of straight lines, thirsting after the exotic, the strange and the monstrous, and all opiates for the senses and the understanding. On the whole, a daring dare-devil, magnificently violent, soaring and high-springing crew of artists, who first had to teach their own century—-it is the century of the mob—what the concept "artist" meant. But they were *ill*....

WAGNER AS THE APOSTLE OF CHASTITY.

1.

Is this the German way?
Comes this low bleating forth from German hearts?
Should Teutons, sin repenting, lash themselves,
Or spread their palms with priestly unctuousness,
Exalt their feelings with the censer's fumes,
And cower and quake and bend the trembling knee,
And with a sickly sweetness plead a prayer?
Then ogle nuns, and ring the Ave-bell,
And thus with morbid fervour out-do heaven?
Is this the German way?
Beware, yet are you free, yet your own Lords.
What yonder lures is Rome, Rome's faith sung without words.

2.

There is no necessary contrast between sensuality and chastity; every good marriage, every genuine love affair is above this contrast; but in those cases where the contrast exists, it is very far from being necessarily a tragic one. This, at least, ought to hold good of all well-constituted and good-spirited mortals, who are not in the least inclined to reckon their unstable equilibrium between angel and *petite bête,* without further ado, among the objections to existence, the more refined and more intelligent like Hafis and Goethe, even regarded it as an additional attraction. It is precisely contradictions of this kind which lure us to life.... On the other hand, it must be obvious, that when Circe's unfortunate animals are induced to worship chastity, all they see and *worship* therein, is their opposite—oh! and with what tragic groaning and fervour, may well be imagined—that same painful and thoroughly superfluous opposition which, towards the end of his life, Richard Wagner undoubtedly wished to set to music and to put on the stage, *And to what purpose?* we may reasonably ask.

3.

And yet this other question can certainly not be circumvented: what business had he actually with that manly (alas! so unmanly) "bucolic simplicity," that poor devil and son of nature—Parsifal, whom he ultimately makes a catholic by such insidious means—what?—was Wagner in earnest with Parsifal? For, that he was laughed at, I cannot deny, any more than Gottfried Keller can.... We should like to believe that "Parsifal" was meant as a piece of idle gaiety, as the closing act and satyric drama, with which Wagner the tragedian wished to take leave of us, of himself, and above all *of tragedy,* in a way which befitted him and his dignity, that is to say, with an extravagant, lofty and most malicious parody of tragedy itself, of all the past and terrible earnestness and sorrow of this world, of the most *ridiculous* form of the unnaturalness of the ascetic ideal, at last overcome. For Parsifal is the subject *par excellence* for a comic opera.... Is Wagner's "Parsifal" his secret laugh of superiority at himself, the triumph of his last and most exalted state of artistic freedom, of artistic transcendence—is it Wagner able to *laugh* at himself? Once again we only wish it were so; for what could Parsifal be if he were *meant seriously?* Is it necessary in his case to say (as I have heard people say) that "Parsifal" is "the product of the mad hatred of knowledge, intellect, and sensuality?" a curse upon the senses and the mind in one breath and in one fit of hatred? an act of apostasy and a return to Christianly sick and obscurantist ideals? And finally even a denial of self, a deletion of self, on the part of an artist who theretofore had worked with all the power of his will in favour of the opposite cause, the spiritualisation and sensualisation of his art? And not only of his art, but also of his life? Let us remember how enthusiastically Wagner at one time walked in the footsteps of the philosopher Feuerbach. Feuerbach's words "healthy sensuality" struck Wagner in the thirties and

forties very much as they struck many other Germans—they called themselves the young Germans—that is to say, as words of salvation. Did he ultimately *change his mind* on this point? It would seem that he had at least had the desire of *changing* his doctrine towards the end.... Had *the hatred of life* become dominant in him as in Flaubert? For "Parsifal" is a work of rancour, of revenge, of the most secret concoction of poisons with which to make an end of the first conditions of life; *it is a bad work.* The preaching of chastity remains an incitement to unnaturalness: I despise anybody who does not regard "Parsifal" as an outrage upon morality.—

HOW I GOT RID OF WAGNER.

1.

Already in the summer of 1876, when the first festival at Bayreuth was at its height, I took leave of Wagner in my soul. I cannot endure anything double-faced. Since Wagner had returned to Germany, he had condescended step by step to everything that I despise —even to anti-Semitism. ... As a matter of fact, it was then high time to bid him farewell: but the proof of this came only too soon. Richard Wagner, ostensibly the most triumphant creature alive; as a matter of fact, though, a cranky and desperate *décadent,* suddenly fell helpless and broken on his knees before the Christian cross.... Was there no German at that time who had the eyes to see, and the sympathy in his soul to feel, the ghastly nature of this spectacle? Was I the only one who *suffered from* it?—Enough, the unexpected event, like a flash of lightning, made me see only too clearly what kind of a place it was that I had just left,—and it also made me shudder as a man shudders who unawares has just escaped a great danger. As I continued my journey alone, I trembled. Not long after this I was ill, more than ill—I was *tired;*—tired of the continual disappointments over everything which remained for us modern men to be enthusiastic about, of the energy, industry, hope, youth, and love that are *squandered everywhere;* tired out of loathing for the whole world of idealistic lying and conscience-softening, which, once again, in the case of Wagner, had scored a victory over a man who was of the bravest; and last but not least, tired by the sadness of a ruthless suspicion—that I was now condemned to be ever more and more suspicious, ever more and more contemptuous, ever more and more *deeply* alone than I had been theretofore. For I had no one save Richard Wagner.... I was always *condemned* to the society of Germans....

2.

Henceforward alone and cruelly distrustful of myself, I then took up sides—not without anger—*against myself* and *for* all that which hurt me and fell hard upon me: and thus I found the road to that courageous pessimism which is the opposite of all idealistic

falsehood, and which, as it seems to me, is also the road to *me—to my mission*.... That hidden and dominating thing, for which for long ages we have had no name, until ultimately it comes forth as our mission,—this tyrant in us wreaks a terrible revenge upon us for every attempt we make either to evade him or to escape him, for every one of our experiments in the way of befriending people to whom we do not belong, for every active occupation, however estimable, which may make us diverge from our principal object:—aye, and even for every virtue which would fain protect us from the rigour of our most intimate sense of responsibility. Illness is always the answer, whenever we venture to doubt our right to *our* mission, whenever we begin to make things too easy for ourselves. Curious and terrible at the same time! It is for our relaxation that we have to pay most dearly! And should we wish after all to return to health, we then have no choice: we are compelled to burden ourselves *more* heavily than we had been burdened before....

THE PSYCHOLOGIST SPEAKS.

1.

The oftener a psychologist—a born, an unavoidable psychologist and soul-diviner—turns his attention to the more select cases and individuals, the greater becomes his danger of being suffocated by sympathy: he needs greater hardness and cheerfulness than any other man. For the corruption, the ruination of higher men, is in fact the rule: it is terrible to have such a rule always before our eyes. The manifold torments of the psychologist who has discovered this ruination, who discovers once, and then discovers almost repeatedly throughout all history, this universal inner "hopelessness" of higher men, this eternal "too late!" in every sense—may perhaps one day be the cause of his "going to the dogs "himself. In almost every psychologist we may see a tell-tale predilection in favour of intercourse with commonplace and well-ordered men: and this betrays how constantly he requires healing, that he needs a sort of flight and forgetfulness, away from what his insight and incisiveness—from what his "business"—has laid upon his conscience. A horror of his memory is typical of him. He is easily silenced by the judgment of others; he hears with unmoved countenance how people honour, admire, love, and glorify, where he has opened his eyes and *seen*—or he even conceals his silence by expressly agreeing with some obvious opinion. Perhaps the paradox of his situation becomes so dreadful that, precisely where he has learnt *great sympathy,* together with *great contempt,* the educated have on their part learnt great reverence. And who knows but in all great instances, just this alone happened: that the multitude worshipped a God, and that the "God" was only a poor sacrificial animal! *Success* has always been the greatest liar—and the "work" itself, the *deed,* is a success too; the great statesman, the conqueror, the discoverer, are disguised in their creations until they can no longer be recognised; the "work" of the artist, of the philosopher, only

invents him who has created it, who is reputed to have created it; the "great men," as they are reverenced, are poor little fictions composed afterwards; in the world of historical values counterfeit coinage *prevails*.

2.

Those great poets, for example, such as Byron, Musset, Poe, Leopardi, Kleist, Gogol (I do not dare to mention much greater names, but I imply them), as they now appear, and were perhaps obliged to be: men of the moment, sensuous, absurd, versatile, light-minded and quick to trust and to distrust; with souls in which usually some flaw has to be concealed; often taking revenge with their works for an internal blemish, often seeking forgetfulness in their soaring from a too accurate memory, idealists out of proximity to the mud:—what a *torment* these great artists are and the so-called higher men in general, to him who has once found them out! We are all special pleaders in the cause of mediocrity. It is conceivable that it is just from woman—who is clair-voyant in the world of suffering, and, alas! also unfortunately eager to help and save to an extent far beyond her powers—that *they* have learnt so readily those outbreaks of boundless *sympathy* which the multitude, above all the reverent multitude, overwhelms with prying and self-gratifying interpretations. This sympathising invariably deceives itself as to its power; woman would like to believe that love can do *everything*—it is the *superstition* peculiar to her. Alas, he who knows the heart finds out how poor, helpless, pretentious, and blundering even the best and deepest love is—how much more readily it *destroys* than saves....

3.

The intellectual loathing and haughtiness of every man who has suffered deeply—the extent to which a man can suffer, almost determines the order of rank—the chilling uncertainty with which he is thoroughly imbued and coloured, that by virtue of his suffering he *knows more* than the shrewdest and wisest can ever know, that he has been familiar with, and "at home" in many distant terrible worlds of which *"you* know nothing!"—this silent intellectual haughtiness, this pride of the elect of knowledge, of the "initiated," of the almost sacrificed, finds all forms of disguise necessary to protect itself from contact with gushing and sympathising hands, and in general from all that is not its equal in suffering. Profound suffering makes noble; it separates.—One of the most refined forms of disguise is Epicurism, along with a certain ostentatious boldness of taste which takes suffering lightly, and puts itself on the defensive against all that is sorrowful and profound. There are "cheerful men" who make use of good spirits, because they are misunderstood on account of them—they *wish* to be misunderstood. There are "scientific minds" who make use of science, because it gives a cheerful

appearance, and because love of science leads people to conclude that a person is shallow—they *wish* to mislead to a false conclusion. There are free insolent spirits which would fain conceal and deny that they are at bottom broken, incurable hearts—this is Hamlet's case: and then folly itself can be the mask of an unfortunate and alas! all too dead-certain knowledge.

EPILOGUE

I have often asked myself whether I am not much more deeply indebted to the hardest years of my life than to any others. According to the voice of my innermost nature, everything necessary, seen from above and in the light of a *superior* economy, is also useful in itself—not only should one bear it, one should *love* it.... *Amor fati:* this is the very core of my being.—And as to my prolonged illness, do I not owe much more to it than I owe to my health? To it I owe a *higher* kind of health, a sort of health which grows stronger under everything that does not actually kill it!—*To it, I owe even my philosophy....* Only great suffering is the ultimate emancipator of spirit; for it teaches one that *vast suspiciousness* which makes an X out of every U, a genuine and proper X, *i.e.,* the antepenultimate letter: Only great suffering; that great suffering, under which we seem to be over a fire of greenwood, the suffering that takes its time—forces us philosophers to descend into our nethermost depths, and to let go of all trustfulness, all good-nature, all whittling-down, all mildness, all mediocrity,—on which things we had formerly staked our humanity. I doubt whether such suffering improves a man; but I know that it makes him *deeper....* Supposing we learn to set our pride, our scorn, our strength of will against it, and thus resemble the Indian who, however cruelly he may be tortured, considers himself revenged on his tormentor by the bitterness of his own tongue. Supposing we withdraw from pain into nonentity, into the deaf, dumb, and rigid sphere of self-surrender, self-forgetfulness, self-effacement: one is another person when one leaves these protracted and dangerous exercises in the art of self-mastery; one has one note of interrogation the more, and above all one has the will henceforward to ask more, deeper, sterner, harder, more wicked, and more silent questions, than anyone has ever asked on earth before.... Trust in life has vanished; life itself has become a *problem.* —But let no one think that one has therefore become a spirit of gloom or a blind owl! Even love of life is still possible,—but it is a *different kind* of love.... It is the love for a woman whom we doubt....

2.

The rarest of all things is this: to have after all another taste—a *second* taste. Out of such abysses, out of the abyss of *great suspicion* as well, a man returns as though born again, he has a new skin, he is more susceptible, more full of wickedness; he has a finer taste for joyfulness; he has a more sensitive tongue for all good things; his senses are

more cheerful; he has acquired a second, more dangerous, innocence in gladness; he is more childish too, and a hundred times more cunning than ever he had been before.

Oh, how much more repulsive pleasure now is to him, that coarse, heavy, buff-coloured pleasure, which is understood by our pleasure-seekers, our "cultured people," our wealthy folk and our rulers! With how much more irony we now listen to the hubbub as of a country fair, with which the "cultured" man and the man about town allow themselves to be forced through art, literature, music, and with the help of intoxicating liquor, to "intellectual enjoyments." How the stage-cry of passion now stings our ears; how strange to our taste the whole romantic riot and sensuous bustle, which the cultured mob are so fond of, together with its aspirations to the sublime, to the exalted and the distorted, have become. No: if we convalescents require an art at all, it is *another* art-a mocking, nimble, volatile, divinely undisturbed, divinely artificial art, which blazes up like pure flame into a cloudless sky! But above all, an art for artists, *only for artists!* We are, after all, more conversant with that which is in the highest degree necessary—cheerfulness, *every kind of* cheerfulness, my friends!... We men of knowledge, now know something only too well: oh how well we have learnt by this time, to forget, *not* to know, as artists!... As to our future: we shall scarcely be found on the track of those Egyptian youths who break into temples at night, who embrace statues, and would fain unveil, strip, and set in broad daylight, everything which there are excellent reasons to keep concealed.[1] No, we are disgusted with this bad taste, this will to truth, this search after truth "at all costs": this madness of adolescence, "the love of truth"; we are now too experienced, too serious, too joyful, too scorched, *too profound* for that.... We no longer believe that truth remains truth when it is *unveiled,*—we have lived enough to understand this.... To-day it seems to us good form not to strip everything naked, not to be present at all things, not to desire to "know" all. "*Tout comprendre c'est tout mépriser.*" ... "Is it true," a little girl once asked her mother, "that the beloved Father is everywhere?—I think it quite improper,"—a hint to philosophers.... The shame with which Nature has concealed herself behind riddles and enigmas should be held in higher esteem. Perhaps truth is a woman who has reasons for *not revealing her reasons?* ... Perhaps her name, to use a Greek word is *Baubo?*—Oh these Greeks, they understood, the art of *living!* For this it is needful to halt bravely at the surface, at the fold, at the skin, to worship appearance, and to believe in forms, tones, words, and the whole *Olympus of appearance*! These Greeks were superficial—from *profundity.* ... And are we not returning to precisely the same thing, we dare-devils of intellect who have scaled the highest and most dangerous pinnacles of present thought, in order to look around us from that height, in order to *look down* from that height? Are we not precisely in this respect—*Greeks?* Worshippers of form, of tones, of words? Precisely on that account—*artists?*

[1] An allusion to Schiller's poem: "Das verschleierte Bild zu Sais."—*Tr.*

SELECTED APHORISMS

SELECTED APHORISMS FROM NIETZSCHE'S RETROSPECT OF HIS YEARS OF FRIENDSHIP WITH WAGNER.

(*Summer* 1878.)

1.

My blunder was this, I travelled to Bayreuth with an ideal in my breast, and was thus doomed to experience the bitterest disappointment. The preponderance of ugliness, grotesqueness and strong pepper thoroughly repelled me.

2.

I utterly disagree with those who were dissatisfied with the decorations, the scenery and the mechanical contrivances at Bayreuth. Far too much industry and ingenuity was applied to the task of chaining the imagination to matters which did not belie their *epic* origin. But as to the naturalism of the attitudes, of the singing, compared with the orchestra!! What affected, artificial and depraved tones, what a distortion of nature, were we made to hear!

3.

We are witnessing the death agony of the *last Art:* Bayreuth has convinced me of this.

4.

My picture of Wagner, completely surpassed him; I had depicted an *ideal monster*—one, however, which is perhaps quite capable of kindling the enthusiasm of artists. The real Wagner, Bayreuth as it actually is, was only like a bad, final proof, pulled on inferior paper from the engraving which was my creation. My longing to see real men and their motives, received an extraordinary impetus from this humiliating experience.

5.

This, to my sorrow, is what I realised; a good deal even struck me with sudden fear. At last I felt, however, that if only I could be strong enough to take sides against myself and what I most loved I would find the road to truth and get solace and encouragement from it—and in this way I became filled with a sensation of joy far greater than that upon which I was now voluntarily turning my back.

6.

I was in love with art, passionately in love, and in the whole of existence saw nothing else than art—and this at an age when, reasonably enough, quite different passions usually possess the soul.

7.

Goethe said: "The yearning spirit within me, which in earlier years I may perhaps have fostered too earnestly, and which as I grew older I tried my utmost to combat, did not seem becoming in the man, and I therefore had to strive to attain to more complete freedom." Conclusion?—I have had to do the same.

8.

He who wakes us always wounds us.

9.

I do not possess the talent of being loyal, and what is still worse, I have not even the vanity to try to appear as if I did.

10.

He who accomplishes anything that lies beyond the vision and the experience of his acquaintances,—provokes envy and hatred masked as pity,—prejudice regards the work as decadence, disease, seduction. Long faces.

11.

I frankly confess that I had hoped that by means of art the Germans would become thoroughly disgusted with *decaying Christianity*—I regarded German mythology as a

solvent, as a means of accustoming people to polytheism.

What a fright I had over the Catholic revival!!

12.

It is possible neither to suffer sufficiently acutely from life, nor to be so lifeless and emotionally weak, as to have *need* of Wagner's art, as to require it as a medium. This is the principal reason of one's *opposition* to it, and not baser motives: something to which we are not driven by any personal need, and which we do not *require,* we cannot esteem so highly.

13.

It is a question either of no longer *requiring* Wagner's art, or of still requiring it

Gigantic forces lie concealed in it: *it drives one beyond its own domain.*

14.

Goethe said: "Are not Byron's audacity, sprightliness and grandeur all creative? We must beware of always looking for this quality in that which is perfectly pure and moral. All *greatness* is creative the moment we realise it." This should be applied to Wagner's art.

15.

We shall always have to credit Wagner with the fact that in the second half of the nineteenth century he impressed art upon our memory as an important and magnificent thing. True, he did this in his own fashion, and this was not the fashion of upright and far-seeing men.

16.

Wagner *versus* the cautious, the cold and the contented of the world—in this lies his greatness —he is a stranger to his age—he combats the frivolous and the super-smart.—But he also fights the just, the moderate, those who delight in the world (like Goethe); and the mild, the people of charm, the scientific among men—this is the reverse of the medal.

17.

Our youth was up in arms against the *soberness* of the age. It plunged into the cult of excess, of passion, of ecstasy, and of the blackest and most austere conception of the world.

18.

Wagner pursues one form of madness, the age another form. Both carry on their chase at the same speed, each is as blind and as unjust as the other.

19.

It is very difficult to trace the course of Wagner's inner development—no trust must be placed in his own description of his soul's experiences. He writes party-pamphlets for his followers.

20.

It is extremely doubtful whether Wagner is able to bear witness about himself.

21.

There are men who try in vain to make a principle out of *themselves.* This was the case with Wagner.

22.

Wagner's obscurity concerning final aims; his non-antique fogginess.

23.

All Wagner's ideas straightway become manias; he is *tyrannised* over by them. How can *such a man allow himself to be tyrannised over in this way!* For instance by his hatred of Jews. He *kills* his themes like his "ideas," by means of his violent love of repeating them. The problem of excessive length and breadth; he bores us with his raptures.

24.

"C'est la rage de vouloir penser et sentir au delà de sa force" (Doudan). The Wagnerites.

25.

Wagner whose ambition far exceeds his natural gifts, has tried an incalculable number of times to achieve what lay beyond his powers—but it almost makes one shudder to see some one assail with such persistence that which defies conquest—the fate of his constitution.

26.

He is always thinking of the most *extreme* expression,—in every word. But in the end superlatives begin to pall.

27.

There is something which is in the highest degree suspicious in Wagner, and that is Wagner's suspicion. It is such a strong trait in him, that on two occasions I doubted whether he were a musician at all.

28.

The proposition: "in the face of perfection there is no salvation save love,"[1] is thoroughly Wagnerian. Profound jealousy of everything great from which he can draw *fresh* ideas. Hatred of all that which he cannot approach: the Renaissance, French and Greek art in style.

[1] What Schiller said of Goethe.—TR.

29.

Wagner is jealous of all periods that have shown *restraint:* he despises beauty and grace, and finds only his own *virtues* in the "Germans," and even attributes all his failings to them.

30.

Wagner has not the power to unlock and liberate the soul of those he frequents: Wagner is not sure of himself, but distrustful and arrogant. His *art* has this effect upon artists, it

is envious of all rivals.

31.

Plato's Envy. He would fain monopolise Socrates. He saturates the latter with himself, pretends to adorn him καλὸς Σωκράτης, and tries to separate all Socratists from him in order himself to appear as the only true apostle. But his historical presentation of him is false, even to a parlous degree: just as Wagner's presentation of Beethoven and Shakespeare is false.

32.

When a dramatist speaks about himself he plays a part: this is inevitable. When Wagner speaks about Bach and Beethoven he speaks like one for whom he would fain be taken. But he impresses only those who are already convinced, for his dissimulation and his genuine nature are far too violently at variance.

33.

Wagner struggles against the "frivolity" in his nature, which to him the ignoble (as opposed to Goethe) constituted the joy of life.

34.

Wagner has the mind of the ordinary man who prefers to trace things to *one* cause. The Jews do the same: one *aim,* therefore one Saviour. In this way he simplifies German and culture; wrongly but strongly.

35.

Wagner admitted all this to himself often enough when in private communion with his soul: I only wish he had also admitted it publicly. For what constitutes the greatness of a character if it is not this, that he who possesses it is able to take sides even against himself in favour of truth.

Wagner's Teutonism.

36.

That which is un-German in Wagner. He lacks the German charm and grace of a Beethoven, a Mozart, a Weber; he also lacks the flowing, cheerful fire (*Allegro con brio*) of Beethoven and Weber. He cannot be free and easy without being grotesque. He lacks modesty, indulges in big drums, and always tends to surcharge his effect. He is not the good official that Bach was. Neither has he that Goethean calm in regard to his rivals.

37.

Wagner always reaches the high-water mark of his vanity when he speaks of the German nature (incidentally it is also the height of his imprudence); for, if Frederick the Great's justice, Goethe's nobility and freedom from envy, Beethoven's sublime resignation, Bach's delicately transfigured spiritual life,—if steady work performed without any thought of glory and success, and without envy, constitute the true *German* qualities, would it not seem as if Wagner almost wished to prove he is no German?

38.

Terrible wildness, abject sorrow, emptiness, the shudder of joy, unexpectedness,—in short all the qualities peculiar to the Semitic race! I believe that the Jews approach Wagner's art with more understanding than the Aryans do.

39.

A passage concerning the Jews, taken from Taine.—As it happens, I have misled the reader, the passage does not concern Wagner at all.—But can it be possible that Wagner is a Jew? In that case we could readily understand his dislike of Jews.[2]

[2] See note on page 37.

40.

Wagner's art is absolutely the *art of the age;* an æsthetic age would have rejected it. The more subtle people amongst us actually do reject it even now. The *coarsifying* of everything Æsthetic.—Compared with Goethe's ideal it is very far behind. The moral contrast of these self-indulgent burningly loyal creatures of Wagner, acts like a *spur,* like an irritant: and even this sensation is turned to account in obtaining an *effect*.

41.

What is it in our age that Wagner's art expresses? That brutality and most delicate weakness which exist side by side, that running wild of natural instincts, and nervous hyper-sensitiveness, that thirst for emotion which arises from fatigue and the love of fatigue.—All this is understood by the Wagnerites.

42.

Stupefaction or intoxication constitute all Wagnerian art. On the other hand I could mention instances in which Wagner stands *higher,* in which real joy flows from him.

43.

The reason why the figures in Wagner's art behave so madly, is because he greatly feared lest people would doubt that they were alive.

44.

Wagner's art is an appeal to inartistic people; all means are welcomed which help towards obtaining an effect. It is calculated not to produce an *artistic effect* but an effect upon the *nerves in general*.

45.

Apparently in Wagner we have an art *for everybody,* because coarse and subtle means seem to be united in it. Albeit its pre-requisite may be musico-æsthetic education, and *particularly* with *moral* indifference.

46.

In Wagner we find the most ambitious *combination* of all means with the view of obtaining the strongest effect: whereas genuine musicians quietly develop individual *genres*.

47.

Dramatists are *borrowers*—their principal source of wealth—artistic thoughts drawn from the epos. Wagner borrowed from classical music besides. Dramatists are constructive geniuses, they are not inventive and original as the epic poets are. Drama takes a lower rank than the epos: it presupposes a coarser and more democratic public.

48.

Wagner does not altogether trust *music.* He weaves kindred sensations into it in order to lend it the character of greatness. He measures himself on others; he first of all gives his listeners intoxicating drinks in order to lead them into believing that it *was the music that intoxicated them.*

49.

The same amount of talent and industry which makes the classic, when it appears some time *too late,* also makes the baroque artist like Wagner.

50.

Wagner's art is calculated to appeal to short-sighted people—one has to get much too close up to it (Miniature): it also appeals to long-sighted people, but not to those with normal sight.

Contradictions in the Idea of Musical Drama.

51.

Just listen to the second act of the "Götterdämmerung," without the drama. It is chaotic music, as wild as a bad dream, and it is as frightfully distinct as if it desired to make itself clear even to deaf people. This volubility *with nothing to say* is alarming. Compared with it the drama is a genuine relief.—Is the fact that this music when heard alone, is, as a whole intolerable (apart from a few intentionally isolated parts) in its *favour?* Suffice it to say that this music without its accompanying drama, is a perpetual contradiction of all the highest laws of style belonging to older music: he who thoroughly accustoms himself to it, loses all feeling for these laws. But has the drama *been improved* thanks to this addition? A *symbolic interpretation* has been affixed to it, a sort of philological commentary, which sets fetters upon the inner and free understanding of the imagination—it is tyrannical. Music is the language of the commentator, who talks the whole of the time and gives us no breathing space. Moreover his is a difficult language which also requires to be explained. He who step by step has mastered, first the libretto (language!), then converted it into action in his mind's eye, then sought out and understood, and became familiar with the musical symbolism thereto: aye, and has fallen in love with all three things: such a man then experiences a great joy. But how *exacting!* It is quite impossible to do this save for a few short moments,—such tenfold attention on the part of one's eyes, ears, understanding, and feeling, such acute activity in apprehending without any productive

reaction, is far too exhausting!—Only the very fewest behave in this way: how is it then that so many are affected? Because most people are only intermittingly attentive, and are inattentive for sometimes whole passages at a stretch; because they bestow their undivided attention now upon the music, later upon the drama, and anon upon the scenery—that is to say they *take the work to pieces*.—But in this way the kind of work we are discussing is condemned: not the drama but a moment of it is the result, an arbitrary selection. The creator of a new *genre* should consider this! The arts should not always be dished up together,—but we should imitate the moderation of the ancients which is truer to human nature.

52.

Wagner reminds one of lava which blocks its own course by congealing, and suddenly finds itself checked by dams which it has itself built. There is no *Allegro con fuoco* for him.

53.

I compare Wagner's music, which would fain have the same effect as speech, with that kind of sculptural relief which would have the same effect as painting. The highest laws of style are violated, and that which is most sublime can no longer be achieved.

54.

The general heaving, undulating and rolling of Wagner's art.

55.

In regard to Wagner's rejection of form, we are reminded of Goethe's remark in conversation with Eckermann: "there is no great art in being brilliant if one respects nothing."

56.

Once one theme is over, Wagner is always embarrassed as to how to continue. Hence the long preparation, the suspense. His peculiar craftiness consisted in transvaluing his weakness into virtues.—

57.

The *lack* of melody and the poverty of melody in Wagner. Melody is a whole consisting of many beautiful proportions, it is the reflection of a well-ordered soul. He strives after melody; but if he finds one, he almost suffocates it in his embrace.

58.

The natural nobility of a Bach and a Beethoven, the beautiful soul (even of a Mendelssohn) are wanting in Wagner. He is one degree lower.

59.

Wagner imitates himself again and again—mannerisms. That is why he was the quickest among musicians to be imitated. It is so easy.

60.

Mendelssohn who lacked the power of radically staggering one (incidentally this was the talent of the Jews in the Old Testament), makes up for this by the things which were his own, that is to say: freedom within the law, and noble emotions kept within the limits of beauty.

61.

Liszt, the first *representative* of all musicians, but *no musician.* He was the prince, not the statesman. The conglomerate of a hundred musicians' souls, but not enough of a personality to cast his own shadow upon them.

62.

The most wholesome phenomenon is *Brahms,* in whose music there is more German blood than in that of Wagner's. With these words I would say something complimentary, but by no means wholly so. 63.

In Wagner's writings there is no greatness or peace, but presumption. Why?

64.

Wagner's Style.— The habit he acquired, from his earliest days, of having his say in the most important matters without a sufficient knowledge of them, has rendered him the obscure and incomprehensible writer that he is. In addition to this he aspired to

imitating the witty newspaper article, and finally acquired that presumption which readily joins hands with carelessness: "and, behold, it was very good."

65.

I am alarmed at the thought of how much pleasure I could find in Wagner's style, which is so careless as to be unworthy of such an artist.

66.

In Wagner, as in Brahms, there is a blind denial of the healthy, in his followers this denial is deliberate and conscious.

67.

Wagner's art is for those who are conscious of an essential blunder in the conduct of their lives. They feel either that they have checked a great nature by a base occupation, or squandered it through idle pursuits, a conventional marriage, &c. &c.

In this quarter the condemnation of the world is the outcome of the condemnation of the ego.

68.

Wagnerites do not wish to alter themselves in any way; they live discontentedly in insipid, conventional and brutal circumstances—only at intervals does art have to raise them as by magic above these things. Weakness of will.

69.

Wagner's art is for scholars who do not dare to become philosophers: they feel discontented with themselves and are generally in a state of obtuse stupefaction—from time to time they take a bath in the *opposite conditions.*

70.

I feel as if I had recovered from an illness: with a feeling of unutterable joy I think of Mozart's *Requiem.* I can once more enjoy simple fare.

71.

I understand Sophocles' development through and through—it was the repugnance to pomp and pageantry.

72.

I gained an insight into the injustice of *idealism,* by noticing that I avenged myself on Wagner for the disappointed hopes I had cherished of him.

73.

I leave my loftiest duty to the end, and that is to thank Wagner and Schopenhauer publicly, and to make them as it were take sides against themselves.

74.

I counsel everybody not to fight shy of such paths (Wagner and Schopenhauer). The wholly *unphilosophic* feeling of remorse, has become quite strange to me.

Wagner's Effects.

75.

We must strive to oppose the false after-effects of Wagner's art. If he, in order to create Parsifal, is forced to pump fresh strength from religious sources, this is not an example but a danger.

76.

I entertain the fear that the effects of Wagner's art will ultimately pour into that torrent which takes its rise on the other side of the mountains, and which knows how to flow even over mountains.[3]

[3] It should be noted that the German Catholic party is called the Ultramontane Party. The river which can thus flow over mountains is Catholicism, towards which Nietzsche thought Wagner's art to be tending.—TR.

WE PHILOLOGISTS

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TRANSLATED BY J. M. KENNEDY

AUTHOR OF "THE QUINTESSENCE OF NIETZSCHE,"
"RELIGIONS AND PHILOSOPHIES OF THE EAST," &.

The mussel is crooked inside and rough outside: it is only when we hear its deep note after blowing into it that we can begin to esteem it at its true value.—(Ind. Sprüche, ed. Böthlingk, i. 335.)

An ugly-looking wind instrument: but we must first blow into it.

TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

The subject of education was one to which Nietzsche, especially during his residence in Basel, paid considerable attention; and his insight into it was very much deeper than that of, say, Herbert Spencer or even Johann Friedrich Herbart, the latter of whom has in late years exercised considerable influence in scholastic circles. Nietzsche clearly saw that the "philologists" (using the word chiefly in reference to the teachers of the classics in German colleges and universities) were absolutely unfitted for their high task, since they were one and all incapable of entering into the spirit of antiquity. Although at the first reading, therefore, this book may seem to be rather fragmentary, there are two main lines of thought running through it: an incisive criticism of German professors, and a number of constructive ideas as to what classical culture really should be.

These scattered aphorisms, indeed, are significant as showing how far Nietzsche had travelled along the road over which humanity had been travelling from remote ages, and how greatly he was imbued with the pagan spirit which he recognised in Goethe and valued in Burckhardt. Even at this early period of his life Nietzsche was convinced that Christianity was the real danger to culture; and not merely modern Christianity, but also the Alexandrian culture, the last gasp of Greek antiquity, which had helped to bring Christianity about. When, in the later aphorisms of "We Philologists," Nietzsche appears to be throwing over the Greeks, it should be remembered that he does not refer to the Greeks of the era of Homer or Æschylus, or even of Aristotle, but to the much later Greeks of the era of Longinus.

Classical antiquity, however, was conveyed to the public through university professors and their intellectual offspring; and these professors, influenced (quite unconsciously, of course) by religious and "liberal" principles, presented to their scholars a kind of

emasculated antiquity. It was only on these conditions that the State allowed the pagan teaching to be propagated in the schools; and if, where classical scholars were concerned, it was more tolerant than the Church had been, it must be borne in mind that the Church had already done all the rough work of emasculating its enemies, and had handed down to the State a body of very innocuous and harmless investigators. A totally erroneous conception of what constituted classical culture was thus brought about Where any distinction was actually made, for example, later Greek thought was enormously over-rated, and early Greek thought equally undervalued. Aphorism 44, together with the first half-dozen or so in the book, may be taken as typical specimens of Nietzsche's protest against this state of things.

It must be added, unfortunately, that Nietzsche's observations in this book apply as much to England as to Germany. Classical teachers here may not be rated so high as they are in Germany; but their influence would appear to be equally powerful, and their theories of education and of classical antiquity equally chaotic. In England as in Germany they are "theologians in disguise." The danger of modern "values" to true culture may be readily gathered from a perusal of aphorisms that follow: and, if these aphorisms enable even one scholar in a hundred to enter more thoroughly into the spirit of a great past, they will not have been penned in vain.

J. M. KENNEDY.

LONDON, *July,* 1911.

1.

To what a great extent men are ruled by pure hazard, and how little reason itself enters into the question, is sufficiently shown by observing how few people have any real capacity for their professions and callings, and how many square pegs there are in round holes: happy and well chosen instances are quite exceptional, like happy marriages, and even these latter are not brought about by reason. A man chooses his calling before he is fitted to exercise his faculty of choice. He does not know the number of different callings and professions that exist; he does not know himself; and then he wastes his years of activity in this calling, applies all his mind to it, and becomes experienced and practical. When, afterwards, his understanding has become fully developed, it is generally too late to start something new; for wisdom on earth has almost always had something of the weakness of old age and lack of vigour about it.

For the most part the task is to make good, and to set to rights as well as possible, that which was bungled in the beginning. Many will come to recognise that the latter part of their life shows a purpose or design which has sprung from a primary discord: it is hard to live through it Towards the end of his life, however, the average man has become accustomed to it—then he may make a mistake in regard to the life he has lived, and

praise his own stupidity: *bene navigavi cum naufragium feci:* he may even compose a song of thanksgiving to "Providence."

2

On inquiring into the origin of the philologist I find:

1. A young man cannot have the slightest conception of what the Greeks and Romans were.

2. He does not know whether he is fitted to investigate into them;

3. And, in particular, he does not know to what extent, in view of the knowledge he may actually possess, he is fitted to be a teacher. What then enables him to decide is not the knowledge of himself or his science; but

(a) Imitation.

(b) The convenience of carrying on the kind of

work which he had begun at school.

(c) His intention of earning a living.

In short, ninety-nine philologists out of a hundred *should* not be philologists at all.

3

The more strict religions require that men shall look upon their activity simply as one means of carrying out a metaphysical scheme: an unfortunate choice of calling may then be explained as a test of the individual. Religions keep their eyes fixed only upon the salvation of the individual: whether he is a slave or a free man, a merchant or a scholar, his aim in life has nothing to do with his calling, so that a wrong choice is not such a very great piece of unhappiness. Let this serve as a crumb of comfort for philologists in general; but true philologists stand in need of a better understanding: what will result from a science which is "gone in for" by ninety-nine such people? The thoroughly unfitted majority draw up the rules of the science in accordance with their own capacities and inclinations; and in this way they tyrannise over the hundredth, the only capable one among them. If they have the training of others in their hands they will train them consciously or unconsciously after their own image: what then becomes of the classicism of the Greeks and Romans?

The points to be proved are:—

(a) The disparity between philologists and the ancients.

(b) The inability of the philologist to train his pupils, even with the help of the ancients.

(c) The falsifying of the science by the (incapacity of the) majority; the wrong requirements held in view; the renunciation of the real aim of this science.

4

All this affects the sources of our present philology: a sceptical and melancholy attitude. But how otherwise are philologists to be produced?

The imitation of antiquity: is not this a principle which has been refuted by this time?

The flight from actuality to the ancients: does not this tend to falsify our conception of antiquity?

5

We are still behindhand in one type of contemplation: to understand how the greatest productions of the intellect have a dreadful and evil background: the sceptical type of contemplation. Greek antiquity is now investigated as the most beautiful example of life.

As man assumes a sceptical and melancholy attitude towards his life's calling, *so* we must sceptically examine the highest life's calling of a nation: in order that we may understand what life is.

6

My words of consolation apply particularly to the single tyrannised individual out of a hundred: such exceptional ones should simply treat all the unenlightened majorities as their subordinates; and they should in the same way take advantage of the prejudice, which is still widespread, in favour of classical instruction—they need many helpers. But they must have a clear perception of what their actual goal is.

7

Philology as the science of antiquity does not, of course, endure for ever; its elements are not inexhaustible. What cannot be exhausted, however, is the ever-new adaptation of one's age to antiquity; the comparison of the two. If we make it our task to understand our own age better by means of antiquity, then our task will be an everlasting one.—This is the antinomy of philology: people have always endeavoured to understand antiquity by means of the present—and shall the present now be understood by-means of antiquity? Better: people have explained antiquity to themselves out of their own

experiences; and from the amount of antiquity thus acquired they have assessed the value of their experiences. Experience, therefore, is certainly an essential pre-requisite for a philologist—that is, the philologist must first of all be a man; for then only can he be productive as a philologist. It follows from this that old men are well suited to be philologists if they were not such during that portion of their life which was richest in experiences.

It must be insisted, however, that it is only through a knowledge of the present that one can acquire an inclination for the study of classical antiquity. Where indeed should the impulse come from if not from this inclination? When we observe how few philologists there actually are, except those that have taken up philology as a means of livelihood, we can easily decide for ourselves what is the matter with this impulse for antiquity: it hardly exists at all, for there are no disinterested philologists.

Our task then is to secure for philology the universally educative results which it should bring about. The means: the limitation of the number of those engaged in the philological profession (doubtful whether young men should be made acquainted with philology at all). Criticism of the philologist. The value of antiquity: it sinks with you: how deeply you must have sunk, since its value is now so little!

8

It is a great advantage for the true philologist that a great deal of preliminary work has been done in his science, so that he may take possession of this inheritance if he is strong enough for it—I refer to the valuation of the entire Hellenic mode of thinking. So long as philologists worked simply at details, a misunderstanding of the Greeks was the consequence. The stages of this under-valuation are: the sophists of the second century, the philologist-poets of the Renaissance, and the philologist as the teacher of the higher classes of society (Goethe, Schiller).

Valuing is the most difficult of all.

In what respect is one most fitted for this valuing?—Not, at all events, when one is trained for philology as one is now. It should be ascertained to what extent our present means make this last object impossible.—Thus the philologist himself is not the aim of philology.

9

Most men show clearly enough that they do not regard themselves as individuals: their lives indicate this. The Christian command that everyone shall steadfastly keep his eyes fixed upon his salvation, and his alone, has as its counterpart the general life of mankind, where every man lives merely as a point among other points—living not only

as the result of earlier generations, but living also only with an eye to the future. There are only three forms of existence in which a man remains an individual: as a philosopher, as a Saviour, and as an artist. But just let us consider how a scientific man bungles his life: what has the teaching of Greek particles to do with the sense of life?—Thus we can also observe how innumerable men merely live, as it were, a preparation for a man: the philologist, for example, as a preparation for the philosopher, who in his turn knows how to utilise his ant-like work to pronounce some opinion upon the value of life. When such ant-like work is not carried out under any special direction the greater part of it is simply nonsense, and quite superfluous.

10

Besides the large number of unqualified philologists there is, on the other hand, a number of what may be called born philologists, who from some reason or other are prevented from becoming such. The greatest obstacle, however, which stands in the way of these born philologists is the bad representation of philology by the unqualified philologists.

Leopardi is the modern ideal of a philologist: The German philologists can do nothing. (As a proof of this Voss should be studied!)

11

Let it be considered how differently a science is propagated from the way in which any special talent in a family is transmitted. The bodily transmission of an individual science is something very rare. Do the sons of philologists easily become philologists? *Dubito.* Thus there is no such accumulation of philological capacity as there was, let us say, in Beethoven's family of musical capacity. Most philologists begin from the beginning; and even then they learn from books, and not through travels, &c. They get some training, of course.

12

Most men are obviously in the world accidentally: no necessity of a higher kind is seen in them. They work at this and that; their talents are average. How strange! The manner in which they live shows that they think very little of themselves: they merely esteem themselves in so far as they waste their energy on trifles (whether these be mean or frivolous desires, or the trashy concerns of their everyday calling). In the so-called life's calling, which everyone must choose, we may perceive a touching modesty on the part of mankind. They practically admit in choosing thus: "We are called upon to serve and to be of advantage to our equals—the same remark applies to our neighbour and to

his neighbour; so everyone serves somebody else; no one is carrying out the duties of his calling for his own sake, but always for the sake of others: and thus we are like geese which support one another by the one leaning against the other. *When the aim of each one of us is centred in another, then we have all no object in existing;* and this 'existing for others' is the most comical of comedies."

13

Vanity is the involuntary inclination to set one's self up for an individual while not really being one; that is to say, trying to appear independent when one is dependent. The case of wisdom is the exact contrary: it appears to be dependent while in reality it is independent.

14

The Hades of Homer—From what type of existence is it really copied? I think it is the description of the philologist: it is better to be a day-labourer than to have such an anæmic recollection of the past.—[1]

[1] No doubt a reminiscence of the "Odyssey," Bk. ix.—TR.

15

The attitude of the philologist towards antiquity is apologetic, or else dictated by the view that what our own age values can likewise be found in antiquity. The right attitude to take up, however, is the reverse one, viz., to start with an insight into our modern topsyturviness, and to look back from antiquity to it—and many things about antiquity which have hitherto displeased us will then be seen to have been most profound necessities.

We must make it clear to ourselves that we are acting in an absurd manner when we try to defend or to beautify antiquity: *who* are we!

16

We are under a false impression when we say that there is always some caste which governs a nation's culture, and that therefore savants are necessary; for savants only possess knowledge concerning culture (and even this only in exceptional cases). Among learned men themselves there might be a few, certainly not a caste, but even these would indeed be rare.

17

One very great value of antiquity consists in the fact that its writings are the only ones which modern men still read carefully.

Overstraining of the memory—very common among philologists, together with a poor development of the judgment.

18

Busying ourselves with the culture-epochs of the past: is this gratitude? We should look backwards in order to explain to ourselves the present conditions of culture: we do not become too laudatory in regard to our own circumstances, but perhaps we should do so in order that we may not be too severe on ourselves.

19

He who has no sense for the symbolical has none for antiquity: let pedantic philologists bear this in mind.

20

My aim is to bring about a state of complete enmity between our present "culture" and antiquity. Whoever wishes to serve the former must hate the latter.

21

Careful meditation upon the past leads to the impression that we are a multiplication of many pasts: so how can we be a final aim? But why not? In most instances, however, we do not wish to be this. We take up our positions again in the ranks, work in our own little corner, and hope that what we do may be of some small profit to our successors. But that is exactly the case of the cask of the Danæ: and this is useless, we must again set about doing everything for ourselves, and only for ourselves—measuring science by ourselves, for example with the question: What is science to us? not: what are we to science? People really make life too easy for themselves when they look upon themselves from such a simple historical point of view, and make humble servants of themselves. "Your own salvation above everything"—that is what you should say; and there are no institutions which you should prize more highly than your own soul.—Now, however, man learns to know himself: he finds himself miserable, despises himself, and is pleased to find something worthy of respect outside himself. Therefore he gets rid of himself, so to speak, makes himself subservient to a cause, does his duty strictly, and

atones for his existence. He knows that he does not work for himself alone; he wishes to help those who are daring enough to exist on account of themselves, like Socrates. The majority of men are as it were suspended in the air like toy balloons; every breath of wind moves them.—As a consequence the savant must be such out of self-knowledge, that is to say, out of contempt for himself—in other words he must recognise himself to be merely the servant of some higher being who comes after him. Otherwise he is simply a sheep.

22

It is the duty of the free man to live for his own sake, and not for others. It was on this account that the Greeks looked upon handicrafts as unseemly.

As a complete entity Greek antiquity has not yet been fully valued: I am convinced that if it had not been surrounded by its traditional glorification, the men of the present day would shrink from it horror stricken. This glorification, then, is spurious; gold-paper.

23

The false enthusiasm for antiquity in which many philologists live. When antiquity suddenly comes upon us in our youth, it appears to us to be composed of innumerable trivialities; in particular we believe ourselves to be above its ethics. And Homer and Walter Scott—who carries off the palm? Let us be honest! If this enthusiasm were really felt, people could scarcely seek their life's calling in it. I mean that what we can obtain from the Greeks only begins to dawn upon us in later years: only after we have undergone many experiences, and thought a great deal.

24

People in general think that philology is at an end—while I believe that it has not yet begun.

The greatest events in philology are the appearance of Goethe, Schopenhauer, and Wagner; standing on their shoulders we look far into the distance The fifth and sixth centuries have still to be discovered.

25

Where do we see the effect of antiquity? Not in language, not in the imitation of something or other, and not in perversity and waywardness, to which uses the French have turned it. Our museums are gradually becoming filled up: I always experience a

sensation of disgust when I see naked statues in the Greek style in the presence of this thought-less philistinism which would fain devour everything.

PLANS AND THOUGHTS RELATING TO A WORK ON PHILOLOGY

(1875)

26

Of all sciences philology at present is the most favoured: its progress having been furthered for centuries by the greatest number of scholars in every nation who have had charge of the noblest pupils. Philology has thus had one of the best of all opportunities to be propagated from generation to generation, and to make itself respected. How has it acquired this power?

Calculations of the different prejudices in its favour.

How then if these were to be frankly recognised as prejudices? Would not philology be superfluous if we reckoned up the interests of a position in life or the earning of a livelihood? What if the truth were told about antiquity, and its qualifications for training people to live in the present?

In order that the questions set forth above may be answered let us consider the training of the philologist, his genesis: he no longer comes into being where these interests are lacking.

If the world in general came to know what an unseasonable thing for us antiquity really is, philologists would no longer be called in as the educators of our youth.

Effect of antiquity on the non-philologist likewise nothing. If they showed themselves to be imperative and contradictory, oh, with what hatred would they be pursued! But they always humble themselves.

Philology now derives its power only from the union between the philologists who will not, or cannot, understand antiquity and public opinion, which is misled by prejudices in regard to it.

The real Greeks, and their "watering down" through the philologists.

The future commanding philologist sceptical in regard to our entire culture, and therefore also the destroyer of philology as a profession.

THE PREFERENCE FOR ANTIQUITY

27

If a man approves of the investigation of the past he will also approve and even praise the fact—and will above all easily understand it—that there are scholars who are exclusively occupied with the investigation of Greek and Roman antiquity: but that these scholars are at the same time the teachers of the children of the nobility and gentry is not equally easy of comprehension—here lies a problem.

Why philologists precisely? This is not altogether such a matter of course as the case of a professor of medicine, who is also a practical physician and surgeon. For, if the cases were identical, preoccupation with Greek and Roman antiquity would be identical with the "science of education." In short the relationship between theory and practice in the philologist cannot be so quickly conceived. Whence comes his pretension to be a teacher in the higher sense, not only of all scientific men, but more especially of all cultured men? This educational power must be taken by the philologist from antiquity; and in such a case people will ask with astonishment: how does it come that we attach such value to a far-off past that we can only become cultured men with the aid of its knowledge?

These questions, however, are not asked as a rule: The sway of philology over our means of instruction remains practically unquestioned; and antiquity *has* the importance assigned to it. To this extent the position of the philologist is more favourable than that of any other follower of science. True, he has not at his disposal that great mass of men who stand in need of him—the doctor, for example, has far more than the philologist. But he can influence picked men, or youths, to be more accurate, at a time when all their mental faculties are beginning to blossom forth—people who can afford to devote both time and money to their higher development. In all those places where European culture has found its way, people have accepted secondary schools based upon a foundation of Latin and Greek as the first and highest means of instruction. In this way philology has found its best opportunity of transmitting itself, and commanding respect: no other science has been so well favoured. As a general rule all those who have passed through such institutions have afterwards borne testimony to the excellence of their organisation and curriculum, and such people are, of course, unconscious witnesses in favour of philology. If any who have not passed through these institutions should happen to utter a word in disparagement of this education, an unanimous and yet calm repudiation of the statement at once follows, as if classical education were a kind of witchcraft, blessing its followers, and demonstrating itself to them by this blessing. There is no attempt at polemics: "We have been through it all." "We know it has done us good."

Now there are so many things to which men have become so accustomed that they look upon them as quite appropriate and suitable, for habit intermixes all things with sweetness; and men as a rule judge the value of a thing in accordance with their own desires. The desire for classical antiquity as it is now felt should be tested, and, as it were, taken to pieces and analysed with a view to seeing how much of this desire is due

to habit, and how much to mere love of adventure—I refer to that inward and active desire, new and strange, which gives rise to a productive conviction from day to day, the desire for a higher goal, and also the means thereto: as the result of which people advance step by step from one unfamiliar thing to another, like an Alpine climber.

What is the foundation on which the high value attached to antiquity at the present time is based, to such an extent indeed that our whole modern culture is founded on it? Where must we look for the origin of this delight in antiquity, and the preference shown for it?

I think I have recognised in my examination of the question that all our philology—that is, all its present existence and power—is based on the same foundation as that on which our view of antiquity as the most important of all means of training is based. Philology as a means of instruction is the clear expression of a predominating conception regarding the value of antiquity, and the best methods of education. Two propositions are contained in this statement: In the first place all higher education must be a historical one; and secondly, Greek and Roman history differs from all others in that it is classical. Thus the scholar who knows this history becomes a teacher. We are not here going into the question as to whether higher education ought to be historical or not; but we may examine the second and ask: in how far is it classic?

On this point there are many widespread prejudices. In the first place there is the prejudice expressed in the synonymous concept, "The study of the humanities": antiquity is classic because it is the school of the humane.

Secondly: "Antiquity is classic because it is enlightened——"

28

It is the task of all education to change certain conscious actions and habits into more or less unconscious ones; and the history of mankind is in this sense its education. The philologist now practises unconsciously a number of such occupations and habits. It is my object to ascertain how his power, that is, his instinctive methods of work, is the result of activities which were formerly conscious, but which he has gradually come to feel as such no longer: *but that consciousness consisted of prejudices.* The present power of philologists is based upon these prejudices, for example the value attached to the *ratio* as in the cases of Bentley and Hermann. Prejudices are, as Lichtenberg says, the art impulses of men.

29

It is difficult to justify the preference for antiquity since it has arisen from prejudices:

1. From ignorance of all non-classical antiquity.

2. From a false idealisation of humanitarianism, whilst Hindoos and Chinese are at all events more humane.

3. From the pretensions of school-teachers.

4. From the traditional admiration which emanated from antiquity itself.

5. From opposition to the Christian church; or as a support for this church.

6. From the impression created by the century-long work of the philologists, and the nature of this work: it must be a gold mine, thinks the spectator.

7. The acquirement of knowledge attained as the result of the study. The preparatory school of science.

In short, partly from ignorance, wrong impressions, and misleading conclusions; and also from the interest which philologists have in raising their science to a high level in the estimation of laymen.

Also the preference for antiquity on the part of the artists, who involuntarily assume proportion and moderation to be the property of all antiquity. Purity of form. Authors likewise.

The preference for antiquity as an abbreviation of the history of the human race, as if there were an autochthonous creation here by which all becoming might be studied.

The fact actually is that the foundations of this preference are being removed one by one, and if this is not remarked by philologists themselves, it is certainly being remarked as much as it can possibly be by people outside their circle. First of all history had its effect, and then linguistics brought about the greatest diversion among philologists themselves, and even the desertion of many of them. They have still the schools in their hands: but for how long! In the form in which it has existed up to the present philology is dying out; the ground has been swept from under its feet. Whether philologists may still hope to maintain their status is doubtful; in any case they are a dying race.

30

The peculiarly significant situation of philologists: a class of people to whom we entrust our youth, and who have to investigate quite a special antiquity. The highest value is obviously attached to this antiquity. But if this antiquity has been wrongly valued, then the whole foundation upon which the high position of the philologist is based suddenly collapses. In any case this antiquity has been very differently valued; and our appreciation of the philologists has constantly been guided by it. These people

have borrowed their power from the strong prejudices in favour of antiquity,—this must be made clear.

Philologists now feel that when these prejudices are at last refuted, and antiquity depicted in its true colours, the favourable prejudices towards them will diminish considerably. *It is thus to the interest of their profession not to let a clear impression of antiquity come to light: in particular the impression that antiquity in its highest sense renders one "out of season"* i.e., *an enemy to one's own time.*

It is also to the interest of philologists as a class not to let their calling as teachers be regarded from a higher standpoint than that to which they themselves can correspond.

31

It is to be hoped that there are a few people who look upon it as a problem why philologists should be the teachers of our noblest youths. Perhaps the case will not be always so.—It would be much more natural *per se* if our children were instructed in the elements of geography, natural science, political economy, and sociology, if they were gradually led to a consideration of life itself, and if finally, but much later, the most noteworthy events of the past were brought to their knowledge. A knowledge of antiquity should be among the last subjects which a student would take up; and would not this position of antiquity in the curriculum of a school be more honourable for it than the present one?—Antiquity is now used merely as a propædeutic for thinking, speaking, and writing; but there was a time when it was the essence of earthly knowledge, and people at that time wished to acquire by means of practical learning what they now seek to acquire merely by means of a detailed plan of study—a plan which, corresponding to the more advanced knowledge of the age, has entirely changed.

Thus the inner purpose of philological teaching has been entirely altered; it was at one time material teaching, a teaching that taught how to live; but now it is merely formal.[3]

[3] Formal education is that which tends to develop the critical and logical faculties, as opposed to material education, which is intended to deal with the acquisition of knowledge and its valuation, *e.g.,* history, mathematics, &c. "Material" education, of course, has nothing to do with materialism.—TR.

32

If it were the task of the philologist to impart formal education, it would be necessary for him to teach walking, dancing, speaking, singing, acting, or arguing: and the so-called formal teachers did impart their instruction this way in the second and third centuries. But only the training of a scientific man is taken into account, which results in "formal" thinking and writing, and hardly any speaking at all.

33

If the gymnasium is to train young men for science, people now say there can be no more preliminary preparation for any particular science, so comprehensive have all the sciences become. As a consequence teachers have to train their students generally, that is to say for all the sciences—for scientificality in other words; and for that classical studies are necessary! What a wonderful jump! a most despairing justification! Whatever is, is right,[4] even when it is clearly seen that the "right" on which it has been based has turned to wrong.

[4] The reference is not to Pope, but to Hegel.—TR.

34

It is accomplishments which are expected from us after a study of the ancients: formerly, for example, the ability to write and speak. But what is expected now! Thinking and deduction: but these things are not learnt *from* the ancients, but at best *through* the ancients, by means of science. Moreover, all historical deduction is very limited and unsafe; natural science should be preferred.

35

It is the same with the simplicity of antiquity as it is with the simplicity of style: it is the highest thing which we recognise and must imitate; but it is also the last Let it be remembered that the classic prose of the Greeks is also a late result

36

What a mockery of the study of the "humanities" lies in the fact that they were also called "belles lettres" (bellas litteras)!

37

Wolfs[5] reasons why the Egyptians, Hebrews Persians, and other Oriental nations were not to be set on the same plane with the Greeks and Romans: "The former have either not raised themselves, or have raised themselves only to a slight extent, above that type of culture which should be called a mere civilisation and bourgeois acquirement, as opposed to the higher and true culture of the mind." He then explains that this culture is spiritual and literary: "In a well-organised nation this may be begun earlier than order and peacefulness in the outward life of the people (enlightenment)."

He then contrasts the inhabitants of easternmost Asia ("like such individuals, who are not wanting in clean, decent, and comfortable dwellings, clothing, and surroundings; but who never feel the necessity for a higher enlightenment") with the Greeks ("in the case of the Greeks, even among the most educated inhabitants of Attica, the contrary often happens to an astonishing degree; and the people neglect as insignificant factors that which we, thanks to our love of order, are in the habit of looking upon as the foundations of mental culture itself").

[5] Friedrich August Wolf (1759-1824), the well-known classical scholar, now chiefly remembered by his "Prolegomena ad Homerum."—TR.

38

Our terminology already shows how prone we are to judge the ancients wrongly: the exaggerated sense of literature, for example; or, as Wolf, when speaking of the "inner history of ancient erudition," calls it, "the history of learned enlightenment."

39

According to Goethe, the ancients are "the despair of the emulator." Voltaire said: "If the admirers of Homer were honest, they would acknowledge the boredom which their favourite often causes them."

40

The position we have taken up towards classical antiquity is at bottom the profound cause of the sterility of modern culture; for we have taken all this modern conception of culture from the Hellenised Romans. We must distinguish within the domain of antiquity itself: when we come to appreciate its purely productive period, we condemn at the same time the entire Romano Alexandrian culture. But at the same time also we condemn our own attitude towards antiquity, and likewise our philology.

41

There has been an age-long battle between the Germans and antiquity, *i.e.,* a battle against the old culture: it is certain that precisely what is best and deepest in the German resists it. The main point, however, is that such resistance is only justifiable in the case of the Romanised culture; for this culture, even at that time, was a falling-off from something more profound and noble. It is this latter that the Germans are wrong in resisting.

42

Everything classic was thoroughly cultivated by Charles the Great, whilst he combated everything heathen with the severest possible measures of coercion. Ancient mythology was developed, but German mythology was treated as a crime. The feeling underlying all this, in my opinion, was that Christianity had already overcome the old religion: people no longer feared it, but availed themselves of the culture that rested upon it. But the old German gods were feared.

A great superficiality in the conception of antiquity—little else than an appreciation of its formal accomplishments and its knowledge—must thereby have been brought about. We must find out the forces that stood in the way of increasing our insight into antiquity. First of all, the culture of antiquity is utilised as an incitement towards the acceptance of Christianity: it became, as it were, the premium for conversion, the gilt with which the poisonous pill was coated before being swallowed. Secondly, the help of ancient culture was found to be necessary as a weapon for the intellectual protection of Christianity. Even the Reformation could not dispense with classical studies for this purpose.

The Renaissance, on the other hand, now begins, with a clearer sense of classical studies, which, however, are likewise looked upon from an anti-Christian standpoint: the Renaissance shows an awakening of honesty in the south, like the Reformation in the north. They could not but clash; for a sincere leaning towards antiquity renders one unchristian. On the whole, however, the Church succeeded in turning classical studies into a harmless direction: the philologist was invented, representing a type of learned man who was at the same time a priest or something similar. Even in the period of the Reformation people succeeded in emasculating scholarship. It is on this account that Friedrich August Wolf is noteworthy: he freed his profession from the bonds of theology. This action of his, however, was not fully understood; for an aggressive, active element, such as was manifested by the poet-philologists of the Renaissance, was not developed. The freedom obtained benefited science, but not man.

43

It is true that both humanism and rationalism have brought antiquity into the field as an ally; and it is therefore quite comprehensible that the opponents of humanism should direct their attacks against antiquity also. Antiquity, however, has been misunderstood and falsified by humanism: it must rather be considered as a testimony against humanism, against the benign nature of man, &c. The opponents of humanism are wrong to combat antiquity as well; for in antiquity they have a strong ally.

44

It is so difficult to understand the ancients. We must wait patiently until the spirit moves us. The human element which antiquity shows us must not be confused with humanitarianism. This contrast must be strongly emphasised: philology suffers by endeavouring to substitute the humanitarian; young men are brought forward as students of philology in order that they may thereby become humanitarians. A good deal of history, in my opinion, is quite sufficient for that purpose. The brutal and self-conscious man will be humbled when he sees things and values changing to such an extent.

The human element among the Greeks lies within a certain *naïveté* through which man himself is to be seen—state, art, society, military and civil law, sexual relations, education, party. It is precisely the human element which may be seen everywhere and among all peoples; but among the Greeks it is seen in a state of nakedness and inhumanity which cannot be dispensed with for purposes of instruction. In addition to this, the Greeks have created the greatest number of individuals; and thus they give us so much insight into men,—a Greek cook is more of a cook than any other.

45

I deplore a system of education which does not enable people to understand Wagner, and as the result of which Schopenhauer sounds harsh and discordant in our ears: such a system of education has missed its aim.

46

(THE FINAL DRAFT OF THE FIRST CHAPTER.)

Il faut dire la vérité et s'immoler.—VOLTAIRE.

Let us suppose that there were freer and more superior spirits who were dissatisfied with the education now in vogue, and that they summoned it to their tribunal, what would the defendant say to them? In all probability something like this: "Whether you have a right to summon anyone here or not, I am at all events not the proper person to be called. It is my educators to whom you should apply. It is their duty to defend me, and I have a right to keep silent. I am merely what they have made me."

These educators would now be haled before the tribunal, and among them an entire profession would be observed: the philologists. This profession consists in the first place of those men who make use of their knowledge of Greek and Roman antiquity to bring up youths of thirteen to twenty years of age, and secondly of those men whose task it is to train specially-gifted pupils to act as future teachers-*i.e.,* as the educators of

educators. Philologists of the first type are teachers at the public schools; those of the second are professors at the universities.

The first-named philologists are entrusted with the care of certain specially-chosen youths, those who, early in life, show signs of talent and a sense of what is noble, and whose parents are prepared to allow plenty of time and money for their education. If other boys, who do not fulfil these three conditions, are presented to the teachers, the teachers have the right to refuse them. Those forming the second class, the university professors, receive the young men who feel themselves fitted for the highest and most responsible of callings, that of teachers and moulders of mankind; and these professors, too, may refuse to have anything to do with young men who are not adequately equipped or gifted for the task. If, then, the educational system of a period is condemned, a heavy censure on philologists is thereby implied: either, as the consequence of their wrong-headed view, they insist on giving bad education in the belief that it is good; or they do not wish to give this bad education, but are unable to carry the day in favour of education which they recognise to be better. In other words, their fault is either due to their lack of insight or to their lack of will. In answer to the first charge they would say that they knew no better, and in answer to the second that they could do no better. As, however, these philologists bring up their pupils chiefly with the aid of Greek and Roman antiquity, their want of insight in the first case may be attributed to the fact that they do not understand antiquity; and again to the fact that they bring forward antiquity into the present age as if it were the most important of all aids to instruction, while antiquity, generally speaking, does not assist in training, or at all events no longer does so.

On the other hand, if we reproach our professors with their lack of will, they would be quite right in attributing educational significance and power to antiquity; but they themselves could not be said to be the proper instruments by means of which antiquity could exhibit such power. In other words, the professors would not be real teachers and would be living under false colours: but how, then, could they have reached such an irregular position? Through a misunderstanding of themselves and their qualifications. In order, then, that we may ascribe to philologists their share in this bad educational system of the present time, we may sum up the different factors of their innocence and guilt in the following sentence: the philologist, if he wishes for a verdict of acquittal, must understand three things: antiquity, the present time, and himself: his fault lies in the fact that he either does not understand antiquity, or the present time, or himself.

47

It is not true to say that we can attain culture through antiquity alone. We may learn something from it, certainly; but not culture as the word is now understood. Our present culture is based on an emasculated and mendacious study of antiquity. In order to

understand how ineffectual this study is, just look at our philologists: they, trained upon antiquity, should be the most cultured men. Are they?

48

Origin of the philologist. When a great work of art is exhibited there is always some one who not only feels its influence but wishes to perpetuate it. The same remark applies to a great state—to everything, in short, that man produces. Philologists wish to perpetuate the influence of antiquity: and they can set about it only as imitative artists. Why not as men who form their lives after antiquity?

49

The decline of the poet-scholars is due in great part to their own corruption: their type is continually arising again; Goethe and Leopardi, for example, belong to it. Behind them plod the philologist-savants. This type has its origin in the sophisticism of the second century.

50

Ah, it is a sad story, the story of philology! The disgusting erudition, the lazy, inactive passivity, the timid submission.—Who was ever free?

51

When we examine the history of philology it is borne in upon us how few really talented men have taken part in it. Among the most celebrated philologists are a few who ruined their intellect by acquiring a smattering of many subjects, and among the most enlightened of them were several who could use their intellect only for childish tasks. It is a sad story: no science, I think, has ever been so poor in talented followers. Those whom we might call the intellectually crippled found a suitable hobby in all this hair-splitting.

52

The teacher of reading and writing, and the reviser, were the first types of the philologist.

53

Friedrich August Wolf reminds us how apprehensive and feeble were the first steps taken by our ancestors in moulding scholarship—how even the Latin classics, for example, had to be smuggled into the university market under all sorts of pretexts, as if they had been contraband goods. In the "Göttingen Lexicon" of 1737, J. M. Gesner tells us of the Odes of Horace: "ut imprimis, quid prodesse *in severioribus studiis* possint, ostendat."

54

I was pleased to read of Bentley: "non tam grande pretium emendatiunculis meis statuere soleo, ut singularem aliquam gratiam inde sperem aut exigam."

Newton was surprised that men like Bentley and Hare should quarrel about a book of ancient comedies, since they were both theological dignitaries.

55

Horace was summoned by Bentley as before a judgment seat, the authority of which he would have been the first to repudiate. The admiration which a discriminating man acquires as a philologist is in proportion to the rarity of the discrimination to be found in philologists. Bentley's treatment of Horace has something of the schoolmaster about it. It would appear at first sight as if Horace himself were not the object of discussion, but rather the various scribes and commentators who have handed down the text: in reality, however, it is actually Horace who is being dealt with. It is my firm conviction that to have written a single line which is deemed worthy of being commented upon by scholars of a later time, far outweighs the merits of the greatest critic. There is a profound modesty about philologists. The improving of texts is an entertaining piece of work for scholars, it is a kind of riddle-solving; but it should not be looked upon as a very important task. It would be an argument against antiquity if it should speak less clearly to us because a million words stood in the way!

56

A school-teacher said to Bentley: "Sir, I will make your grandchild as great a scholar as you are yourself." "How can you do that," replied Bentley, "when I have forgotten more than you ever knew?"

57

Bentley's clever daughter Joanna once lamented to her father that he had devoted his time and talents to the criticism of the works of others instead of writing something original. Bentley remained silent for some time as if he were turning the matter over in

his mind. At last he said that her remark was quite right: he himself felt that he might have directed his gifts in some other channel. Earlier in life, nevertheless, he had done something for the glory of God and the improvement of his fellow-men (referring to his "Confutation of Atheism"), but afterwards the genius of the pagans had attracted him, and, *despairing of attaining their level in any other way,* he had mounted upon their shoulders so that he might thus be able to look over their heads.

58

Bentley, says Wolf, both as man of letters and individual, was misunderstood and persecuted during the greater part of his life, or else praised maliciously.

Markland, towards the end of his life—as was the case with so many others like him—became imbued with a repugnance for all scholarly reputation, to such an extent, indeed, that he partly tore up and partly burnt several works which he had long had in hand.

Wolf says: "The amount of intellectual food that can be got from well-digested scholarship is a very insignificant item."

In Winckelmann's youth there were no philological studies apart from the ordinary bread-winning branches of the science—people read and explained the ancients in order to prepare themselves for the better interpretation of the Bible and the Corpus Juris.

59

In Wolf's estimation, a man has reached the highest point of historical research when he is able to take a wide and general view of the whole and of the profoundly conceived distinctions in the developments in art and the different styles of art. Wolf acknowledges, however, that Winckelmann was lacking in the more common talent of philological criticism, or else he could not use it properly: "A rare mixture of a cool head and a minute and restless solicitude for hundreds of things which, insignificant in themselves, were combined in his case with a fire that swallowed up those little things, and with a gift of divination which is a vexation and an annoyance to the uninitiated."

60

Wolf draws our attention to the fact that antiquity was acquainted only with theories of oratory and poetry which facilitated production, τέχναι and *artes* that formed real orators and poets, "while at the present day we shall soon have theories upon which it would be as impossible to build up a speech or a poem as it would be to form a thunderstorm upon a brontological treatise."

61

Wolf's judgment on the amateurs of philological knowledge is noteworthy: "If they found themselves provided by nature with a mind corresponding to that of the ancients, or if they were capable of adapting themselves to other points of view and other circumstances of life, then, with even a nodding acquaintance with the best writers, they certainly acquired more from those vigorous natures, those splendid examples of thinking and acting, than most of those did who during their whole life merely offered themselves to them as interpreters."

62

Says Wolf again: "In the end, only those few ought to attain really complete knowledge who are born with artistic talent and furnished with scholarship, and who make use of the best opportunities of securing, both theoretically and practically, the necessary technical knowledge." True!

63

Instead of forming our students on the Latin models I recommend the Greek, especially Demosthenes: simplicity! This may be seen by a reference to Leopardi, who is perhaps the greatest stylist of the century

64

"Classical education": what do people see in it? Something that is useless beyond rendering a period of military service unnecessary and securing a degree![6]

[6] Students who pass certain examinations need only serve one year in the German Army instead of the usual two or three.—TR.

65

When I observe how all countries are now promoting the advancement of classical literature I say to myself, "How harmless it must be!" and then, "How useful it must be!" It brings these countries the reputation of promoting "free culture." In order that this "freedom" may be rightly estimated, just look at the philologists!

66

Classical education! Yea, if there were only as much paganism as Goethe found and glorified in Winckelmann, even that would not be much. Now, however, that the lying Christendom of our time has taken hold of it, the thing becomes over-powering, and I cannot help expressing my disgust on the point.—People firmly believe in witchcraft where this "classical education "is concerned. They, however, who possess the greatest knowledge of antiquity should likewise possess the greatest amount of culture, viz., our philologists; but what is classical about them?

67

Classical philology is the basis of the most shallow rationalism: always having been dishonestly applied, it has gradually become quite ineffective. Its effect is one more illusion of the modern man. Philologists are nothing but a guild of sky-pilots who are not known as such: this is why the State takes an interest in them. The utility of classical education is completely used up, whilst, for example, the history of Christianity still shows its power.

68

Philologists, when discussing their science, never get down to the root of the subject: they never set forth philology itself as a problem. Bad conscience? or merely thoughtlessness?

69

We learn nothing from what philologists say about philology: it is all mere tittle-tattle—for example, Jahn's[7] "The Meaning and Place of the Study of Antiquity in Germany." There is no feeling for what should be protected and defended: thus speak people who have not even thought of the possibility that any one could attack them.

[7] Otto Jahn (1813-69), who is probably best remembered in philological circles by his edition of Juvenal.—*TR.*

70

Philologists are people who exploit the vaguely-felt dissatisfaction of modern man, and his desire for "something better," in order that they may earn their bread and butter.

I know them—I myself am one of them.

71

Our philologists stand in the same relation to true educators as the medicine-men of the wild Indians do to true physicians. What astonishment will be felt by a later age!

72

What they lack is a real taste for the strong and powerful characteristics of the ancients. They turn into mere panegyrists, and thus become ridiculous.

73

They have forgotten how to address other men; and, as they cannot speak to the older people, they cannot do so to the young.

74

When we bring the Greeks to the knowledge of our young students, we are treating the latter as if they were well-informed and matured men. What, indeed, is there about the Greeks and their ways which is suitable for the young? In the end we shall find that we can do nothing for them beyond giving them isolated details. Are these observations for young people? What we actually do, however, is to introduce our young scholars to the collective wisdom of antiquity. Or do we not? The reading of the ancients is emphasised in this way.

My belief is that we are forced to concern ourselves with antiquity at a wrong period of our lives. At the end of the twenties its meaning begins to dawn on one.

75

There is something disrespectful about the way in which we make our young students known to the ancients: what is worse, it is unpedagogical; for what can result from a mere acquaintance with things which a youth cannot consciously esteem! Perhaps he must learn to "*believe,*" and this is why I object to it.

76

There are matters regarding which antiquity instructs us, and about which I should hardly care to express myself publicly.

77

All the difficulties of historical study to be elucidated by great examples.

Why our young students are not suited to the Greeks.

The consequences of philology: Arrogant expectation. Culture-philistinism. Superficiality.

Too high an esteem for reading and writing. Estrangement from the nation and its needs. The philologists themselves, the historians, philosophers, and jurists all end in smoke.

Our young students should be brought into contact with real sciences. Likewise with real art.

In consequence, when they grew older, a desire for *real* history would be shown.

78

Inhumanity: even in the "Antigone," even in Goethe's "Iphigenia."

The want of "rationalism" in the Greeks.

Young people cannot understand the political affairs of antiquity.

The poetic element: a bad expectation.

79

Do the philologists know the present time? Their judgments on it as Periclean; their mistaken judgments when they speak of Freytag's[8] genius as resembling that of Homer, and so on; their following in the lead of the litterateurs; their abandonment of the pagan sense, which was exactly the classical element that Goethe discovered in Winckelmann.

[8] Gustav Freytag: at one time a famous German novelist. —TR.

80

The condition of the philologists may be seen by their indifference at the appearance of Wagner. They should have learnt even more through him than through Goethe, and they did not even glance in his direction. That shows that they are not actuated by any strong need, or else they would have an instinct to tell them where their food was to be found.

81

Wagner prizes his art too highly to go and sit in a corner with it, like Schumann. He either surrenders himself to the public ("Rienzi") or he makes the public surrender itself

to him. He educates it up to his music. Minor artists, too, want their public, but they try to get it by inartistic means, such as through the Press, Hanslick,[9] &c.

[9] A well-known anti-Wagnerian musical critic of Vienna. —TR.

82

Wagner perfected the inner fancy of man: later generations will see a renaissance in sculpture. Poetry must precede the plastic art.

83

I observe in philologists:

1. Want of respect for antiquity.

2. Tenderness and flowery oratory; even an apologetic tone.

3. Simplicity in their historical comments.

4. Self-conceit.

5. Under-estimation of the talented philologists.

84

Philologists appear to me to be a secret society who wish to train our youth by means of the culture of antiquity: I could well understand this society and their views being criticised from all sides, A great deal would depend upon knowing what these philologists understood by the term "culture of antiquity."—If I saw, for example, that they were training their pupils against German philosophy and German music, I should either set about combating them or combating the culture of antiquity, perhaps the former, by showing that these philologists had not understood the culture of antiquity. Now I observe:

1. A great indecision in the valuation of the culture of antiquity on the part of philologists.

2. Something very non-ancient in themselves; something non-free.

3. Want of clearness in regard to the particular type of ancient culture they mean.

4. Want of judgment in their methods of instruction, *e.g.,* scholarship.

5. Classical education is served out mixed up with Christianity.

85

It is now no longer a matter of surprise to me that, with such teachers, the education of our time should be worthless. I can never avoid depicting this want of education in its true colours, especially in regard to those things which ought to be learnt from antiquity if possible, for example, writing, speaking, and so on.

86

The transmission of the emotions is hereditary: let that be recollected when we observe the effect of the Greeks upon philologists.

87

Even in the best of cases, philologists seek for no more than mere "rationalism" and Alexandrian culture—not Hellenism.

88

Very little can be gained by mere diligence, if the head is dull. Philologist after philologist has swooped down on Homer in the mistaken belief that something of him can be obtained by force. Antiquity speaks to us when it feels a desire to do so; not when we do.

89

The inherited characteristic of our present-day philologists: a certain sterility oi insight has resulted: for they promote the science, but not the philologist.

90

The following is one way of carrying on classical studies, and a frequent one: a man throws himself thoughtlessly, or is thrown, into some special branch or other, whence he looks to the right and left and sees a great deal that is good and new. Then, in some unguarded moment, he asks himself: "But what the devil has all this to do with me?" In the meantime he has grown old and has become accustomed to it all; and therefore he continues in his rut—just as in the case of marriage.

91

In connection with the training of the modern philologist the influence of the science of linguistics should be mentioned and judged; a philologist should rather turn aside from it: the question of the early beginnings of the Greeks and Romans should be nothing to him: how can they spoil their own subject in such a way?

92

A morbid passion often makes its appearance from time to time in connection with the oppressive uncertainty of divination, a passion for believing and feeling sure at all costs: for example, when dealing with Aristotle, or in the discovery of magic numbers, which, in Lachmann's case, is almost an illness.

93

The consistency which is prized in a savant is pedantry if applied to the Greeks.

94

(THE GREEKS AND THE PHILOLOGISTS.)

THE GREEKS:	THE PHILOLOGISTS are:
render homage to beauty,	babblers and triflers,
develop the body,	ugly-looking creatures,
speak clearly,	stammerers,
are religious transfigurers of everyday occurrences,	filthy pedants,
are listeners and observers,	quibblers and scarecrows,
have an aptitude for the symbolical,	unfitted for the symbolical,
are in full possession of their freedom as men,	ardent slaves of the State,
can look innocently out into the world,	Christians in disguise,
are the pessimists of thought.	philistines.

95

Bergk's "History of Literature": Not a spark of Greek fire or Greek sense.

96

People really do compare our own age with that of Pericles, and congratulate themselves on the reawakening of the feeling of patriotism: I remember a parody on the funeral oration of Pericles by G. Freytag,[10] in which this prim and strait-laced "poet" depicted the happiness now experienced by sixty-year-old men.—All pure and simple caricature! So this is the result! And sorrow and irony and seclusion are all that remain for him who has seen more of antiquity than this.

[10] See note on p. 149.—TR.

97

If we change a single word of Lord Bacon's we may say: infimarum Græcorum virtutum apud philologos laus est, mediarum admiratio, supremarum sensus nullus.

98

How can anyone glorify and venerate a whole people! It is the individuals that count, even in the case of the Greeks.

99

There is a great deal of caricature even about the Greeks: for example, the careful attention devoted by the Cynics to their own happiness.

100

The only thing that interests me is the relationship of the people considered as a whole to the training of the single individuals: and in the case of the Greeks there are some factors which are very favourable to the development of the individual. They do not, however, arise from the goodwill of the people, but from the struggle between the evil instincts.

By means of happy inventions and discoveries, we can train the individual differently and more highly than has yet been done by mere chance and accident. There are still hopes: the breeding of superior men.

101

The Greeks are interesting and quite disproportionately important because they had such a host of great individuals. How was that possible? This point must be studied.

102

The history of Greece has hitherto always been written optimistically.

103

Selected points from antiquity: the power, fire, and swing of the feeling the ancients had for music (through the first Pythian Ode), purity in their historical sense, gratitude for the blessings of culture, the fire and corn feasts.

The ennoblement of jealousy: the Greeks the most jealous nation.

Suicide, hatred of old age, of penury. Empedocles on sexual love.

104

Nimble and healthy bodies, a clear and deep sense for the observation of everyday matters, manly freedom, belief in good racial descent and good upbringing, warlike virtues, jealousy in the ἀριστεύειν, ıdelight in the arts, respect for leisure, a sense for free individuality, for the symbolical.

105

The spiritual culture of Greece an aberration of the amazing political impulse towards ἀριστεύειν. The polis utterly opposed to new education; culture nevertheless existed.

106

When I say that, all things considered, the Greeks were more moral than modern men: what do I mean by that? From what we can perceive of the activities of their soul, it is clear that they had no shame, they had no bad conscience. They were more sincere, open-hearted, and passionate, as artists are; they exhibited a kind of child-like *naïveté*. It thus came about that even in all their evil actions they had a dash of purity about them, something approaching the holy. A remarkable number of individualities: might there not have been a higher morality in that? When we recollect that character develops slowly, what can it be that, in the long run, breeds individuality? Perhaps vanity, emulation? Possibly. Little inclination for conventional things.

107

The Greeks as the geniuses among the nations.

Their childlike nature, credulousness.

Passionate. Quite unconsciously they lived in such a way as to procreate genius. Enemies of shyness and dulness. Pain. Injudicious actions. The nature of their intuitive insight into misery, despite their bright and genial temperament. Profoundness in their apprehension and glorifying of everyday things (fire, agriculture). Mendacious, unhistorical. The significance of the polis in culture instinctively recognised; favourable as a centre and periphery for great men (the facility of surveying a community, and also the possibility of addressing it as a whole). Individuality raised to the highest power through the polis. Envy, jealousy, as among gifted people.

108

The Greeks were lacking in sobriety and caution. Over-sensibility; abnormally active condition of the brain and the nerves; impetuosity and fervour of the will.

109

"Invariably to see the general in the particular is the distinguishing characteristic of genius," says Schopenhauer. Think of Pindar, &c.—"ΣωΦροσύνη," according to Schopenhauer, has its roots in the clearness with which the Greeks saw into themselves and into the world at large, and thence became conscious of themselves.

The "wide separation of will and intellect" indicates the genius, and is seen in the Greeks.

"The melancholy associated with genius is due to the fact that the will to live, the more clearly it is illuminated by the contemplating intellect, appreciates all the more clearly the misery of its condition," says Schopenhauer. *Cf.* the Greeks.

110

The moderation of the Greeks in their sensual luxury, eating, and drinking, and their pleasure therein; the Olympic plays and their worship: that shows what they were.

In the case of the genius, "the intellect will point out the faults which are seldom absent in an instrument that is put to a use for which it was not intended."

"The will is often left in the lurch at an awkward moment: hence genius, where real life is concerned is more or less unpractical—its behaviour often reminds us of madness."

111

We contrast the Romans, with their matter-of-fact earnestness, with the genial Greeks! Schopenhauer: "The stern, practical, earnest mode of life which the Romans called *gravitas* presupposes that the intellect does not forsake the service of the will in order to roam far off among things that have no connection with the will."

112

It would have been much better if the Greeks had been conquered by the Persians instead of by the Romans.

113

The characteristics of the gifted man who is lacking in genius are to be found in the average Hellene—all the dangerous characteristics of such a disposition and character.

114

Genius makes tributaries of all partly-talented people: hence the Persians themselves sent their ambassadors to the Greek oracles.

115

The happiest lot that can fall to the genius is to exchange doing and acting for leisure; and this was something the Greeks knew how to value. The blessings of labour! *Nugari* was the Roman name for all the exertions and aspirations of the Greeks. No happy course of life is open to the genius; he stands in contradiction to his age and must perforce struggle with it. Thus the Greeks: they instinctively made the utmost exertions to secure a safe refuge for themselves (in the *polis*). Finally, everything went to pieces in politics. They were compelled to take up a stand against their enemies: this became ever more and more difficult, and at last impossible.

116

Greek culture is based on the lordship of a small class over four to nine times their number of slaves. Judged by mere numbers, Greece was a country inhabited by barbarians. How can the ancients be thought to be humane? There was a great contrast between the genius and the breadwinner, the half-beast of burden. The Greeks believed in a racial distinction. Schopenhauer wonders why Nature did not take it into her head to invent two entirely separate species of men.

The Greeks bear the same relation to the barbarians "as free-moving or winged animals do to the barnacles which cling tightly to the rocks and must await what fate chooses to send them"—Schopenhauer's simile.

117

The Greeks as the only people of genius in the history of the world. Such they are even when considered as learners; for they understand this best of all, and can do more than merely trim and adorn themselves with what they have borrowed, as did the Romans. The constitution of the *polls* is a Phœnician invention: even this has been imitated by the Hellenes. For a long time they dabbled in everything, like joyful dilettanti. Aphrodite is likewise Phœnician. Neither do they disavow what has come to them through immigration and does not originally belong to their own country.

118

The happy and comfortable constitution of the politico-social position must not be sought among the Greeks: that is a goal which dazzles the eyes of our dreamers of the future! It was, on the contrary, dreadful; for this is a matter that must be judged according to the following standard: the more spirit, the more suffering (as the Greeks themselves prove). Whence it follows: the more stupidity, the more comfort. The philistine of culture is the most comfortable creature the sun has ever shone upon: and he is doubtless also in possession of the corresponding stupidity.

119

The Greek *polis* and the αἰὲν ἀριστεύειν grew up out of mutual enmity. Hellenic and philanthropic are contrary adjectives, although the ancients flattered themselves sufficiently.

Homer is, in the world of the Hellenic discord, the pan-Hellenic Greek. The "ἀγών" of the Greeks is also manifested in the Symposium in the shape of witty conversation.

120

Wanton, mutual annihilation inevitable: so long as a single *polis* wished to exist—its envy for everything superior to itself, its cupidity, the disorder of its customs, the enslavement of the women, lack of conscience in the keeping of oaths, in murder, and in cases of violent death.

Tremendous power of self-control: for example in a man like Socrates, who was capable of everything evil.

121

Its noble sense of order and systematic arrangement had rendered the Athenian state immortal.—The ten strategists in Athens! Foolish! Too big a sacrifice on the altar of jealousy.

122

The recreations of the Spartans consisted of feasting, hunting, and making war: their every-day life was too hard. On the whole, however, their state is merely a caricature of the polis; a corruption of Hellas. The breeding of the complete Spartan—but what was there great about him that his breeding should have required such a brutal state!

123

The political defeat of Greece is the greatest failure of culture; for it has given rise to the atrocious theory that culture cannot be pursued unless one is at the same time armed to the teeth. The rise of Christianity was the second greatest failure: brute force on the one hand, and a dull intellect on the other, won a complete victory over the aristocratic genius among the nations. To be a Philhellenist now means to be a foe of brute force and stupid intellects. Sparta was the ruin of Athens in so far as she compelled Athens to turn her entire attention to politics and to act as a federal combination.

124

There are domains of thought where the *ratio* will only give rise to disorder; and the philologist, who possesses nothing more, is lost through it and is unable to see the truth: *e.g.,* in the consideration of Greek mythology. A merely fantastic person, of course, has no claim either: one must possess Greek imagination and also a certain amount of Greek piety. Even the poet does not require to be too consistent, and consistency is the last thing Greeks would understand.

125

Almost all the Greek divinities are accumulations of divinities: we find one layer over another, soon to be hidden and smoothed down by yet a third, and so on. It scarcely seems to me to be possible to pick these various divinities to pieces in a scientific

manner; for no good method of doing so can be recommended: even the poor conclusion by analogy is in this instance a very good conclusion.

126

At what a distance must one be from the Greeks to ascribe to them such a stupidly narrow autochthony as does Ottfried Müller![11] How Christian it is to assume, with Welcker,[12] that the Greeks were originally monotheistic! How philologists torment themselves by investigating the question whether Homer actually wrote, without being able to grasp the far higher tenet that Greek art long exhibited an inward enmity against writing, and did not wish to be read at all.

[11] Karl Ottfried Müller (1797-1840), classical archæologist, who devoted special attention to Greece.—TR.

[12] Friedrich Gottlieb Welcker (1784-1868), noted for his ultra-profound comments on Greek poetry.—TR.

127

In the religious cultus an earlier degree of culture comes to light: a remnant of former times. The ages that celebrate it are not those which invent it; the contrary is often the case. There are many contrasts to be found here. The Greek cultus takes us back to a pre-Homeric disposition and culture. It is almost the oldest that we know of the Greeks —older than their mythology, which their poets have considerably remoulded, so far as we know it—Can this cult really be called Greek? I doubt it: they are finishers, not inventors. *They preserve* by means of this beautiful completion and adornment.

128

It is exceedingly doubtful whether we should draw any conclusion in regard to nationality and relationship with other nations from languages. A victorious language is nothing but a frequent (and not always regular) indication of a successful campaign. Where could there have been autochthonous peoples! It shows a very hazy conception of things to talk about Greeks who never lived in Greece. That which is really Greek is much less the result of natural aptitude than of adapted institutions, and also of an acquired language.

129

To live on mountains, to travel a great deal, and to move quickly from one place to another: in these ways we can now begin to compare ourselves with the Greek gods. We

know the past, too, and we almost know the future. What would a Greek say, if only he could see us!

130

The gods make men still more evil; this is the nature of man. If we do not like a man, we wish that he may become worse than he is, and then we are glad. This forms part of the obscure philosophy of hate—a philosophy which has never yet been written, because it is everywhere the *pudendum* that every one feels.

131

The pan-Hellenic Homer finds his delight in the frivolity of the gods; but it is astounding how he can also give them dignity again. This amazing ability to raise one's self again, however, is Greek.

132

What, then, is the origin of the envy of the gods? people did not believe in a calm, quiet happiness, but only in an exuberant one. This must have caused some displeasure to the Greeks; for their soul was only too easily wounded: it embittered them to see a happy man. That is Greek. If a man of distinguished talent appeared, the flock of envious people must have become astonishingly large. If any one met with a misfortune, they would say of him: "Ah! no wonder! he was too frivolous and too well off." And every one of them would have behaved exuberantly if he had possessed the requisite talent, and would willingly have played the rôle of the god who sent the unhappiness to men.

133

The Greek gods did not demand any complete changes of character, and were, generally speaking, by no means burdensome or importunate: it was thus possible to take them seriously and to believe in them. At the time of Homer, indeed, the nature of the Greek was formed: flippancy of images and imagination was necessary to lighten the weight of its passionate disposition and to set it free.

134

Every religion has for its highest images an analogon in the spiritual condition of those who profess it. The God of Mohammed: the solitariness of the desert, the distant roar of the lion, the vision of a formidable warrior. The God of the Christians: everything that

men and women think of when they hear the word "love." The God of the Greeks: a beautiful apparition in a dream.

135

A great deal of intelligence must have gone to the making up of a Greek polytheism: the expenditure of intelligence is much less lavish when people have only *one* God.

136

Greek morality is not based on religion, but on the *polis*. There were only priests of the individual gods; not representatives of the whole religion: *i.e.,* no guild of priests. Likewise no Holy Writ.

137

The "lighthearted" gods: this is the highest adornment which has ever been bestowed upon the world—with the feeling, How difficult it is to live!

138

If the Greeks let their "reason" speak, their life seems to them bitter and terrible. They are not deceived. But they play round life with lies: Simonides advises them to treat life as they would a play; earnestness was only too well known to them in the form of pain. The misery of men is a pleasure to the gods when they hear the poets singing of it. Well did the Greeks know that only through art could even misery itself become a source of pleasure; *vide tragœdiam.*

139

It is quite untrue to say that the Greeks only took *this* life into their consideration—they suffered also from thoughts of death and Hell. But no "repentance" or contrition.

140

The incarnate appearance of gods, as in Sappho's invocation to Aphrodite, must not be taken as poetic licence: they are frequently hallucinations. We conceive of a great many things, including the will to die, too superficially as rhetorical.

141

The "martyr" is Hellenic: Prometheus, Hercules. The hero-myth became pan-Hellenic: a poet must have had a hand in that!

142

How *realistic* the Greeks were even in the domain of pure inventions! They poetised reality, not yearning to lift themselves out of it. The raising of the present into the colossal and eternal, *e.g.,* by Pindar.

143

What condition do the Greeks premise as the model of their life in Hades? Anæmic, dreamlike, weak: it is the continuous accentuation of old age, when the memory gradually becomes weaker and weaker, and the body still more so. The senility of senility: this would be our state of life in the eyes of the Hellenes.

144

The naïve character of the Greeks observed by the Egyptians.

145

The truly scientific people, the literary people, were the Egyptians and not the Greeks. That which has the appearance of science among the Greeks, originated among the Egyptians and later on returned to them to mingle again with the old current. Alexandrian culture is an amalgamation of Hellenic and Egyptian: and when our world again founds its culture upon the Alexandrian culture, then ...[13]

[13] "We shall once again be shipwrecked." The omission is in the original.—TR.

146

The Egyptians are far more of a literary people than the Greeks. I maintain this against Wolf. The first grain in Eleusis, the first vine in Thebes, the first olive-tree and fig-tree. The Egyptians had lost a great part of their mythology.

147

The unmathematical undulation of the column in Paestum is analogous to the modification of the *tempo:* animation in place of a mechanical movement.

148

The desire to find something certain and fixed in æsthetic led to the worship of Aristotle: I think, however, that we may gradually come to see from his works that he understood nothing about art; and that it is merely the intellectual conversations of the Athenians, echoing in his pages, which we admire.

149

In Socrates we have as it were lying open before us a specimen of the consciousness out of which, later on, the instincts of the theoretic man originated: that one would rather die than grow old and weak in mind.

150

At the twilight of antiquity there were still wholly unchristian figures, which were more beautiful, harmonious, and pure than those of any Christians: *e.g.,* Proclus. His mysticism and syncretism were things that precisely Christianity cannot reproach him with. In any case, it would be my desire to live together with such people. In comparison with them Christianity looks like some crude brutalisation, organised for the benefit of the mob and the criminal classes.

Proclus, who solemnly invokes the rising moon.

151

With the advent of Christianity a religion attained the mastery which corresponded to a pre-Greek condition of mankind: belief in witchcraft in connection with all and everything, bloody sacrifices, superstitious fear of demoniacal punishments, despair in one's self, ecstatic brooding and hallucination; man's self become the arena of good and evil spirits and their struggles.

152

All branches of history have experimented with antiquity: critical consideration alone remains. By this term I do not mean conjectural and literary-historical criticism.

153

Antiquity has been treated by all kinds of historians and their methods. We have now had enough experience, however, to turn the history of antiquity to account without being shipwrecked on antiquity itself.

154

We can now look back over a fairly long period of human existence: what will the humanity be like which is able to look back at us from an equally long distance? which finds us lying intoxicated among the debris of old culture! which finds its only consolation in "being good" and in holding out the "helping hand," and turns away from all other consolations!—Does beauty, too, grow out of the ancient culture? I think that our ugliness arises from our metaphysical remnants: our confused morals, the worthlessness of our marriages, and so on, are the cause. The beautiful man, the healthy, moderate, and enterprising man, moulds the objects around him into beautiful shapes after his own image.

155

Up to the present time all history has been written from the standpoint of success, and, indeed, with the assumption of a certain reason in this success. This remark applies also to Greek history: so far we do not possess any. It is the same all round, however: where are the historians who can survey things and events without being hum-bugged by stupid theories? I know of only one, Burckhardt. Everywhere the widest possible optimism prevails in science. The question: "What would have been the consequence if so and so had not happened?" is almost unanimously thrust aside, and yet it is the cardinal question. Thus everything becomes ironical. Let us only consider our own lives. If we examine history in accordance with a preconceived plan, let this plan be sought in the purposes of a great man, or perhaps in those of a sex, or of a party. Everything else is a chaos.—Even in natural science we find this deification of the necessary.

Germany has become the breeding-place of this historical optimism; Hegel is perhaps to blame for this. Nothing, however, is more responsible for the fatal influence of German culture. Everything that has been kept down by success gradually rears itself up: history as the scorn of the conqueror; a servile sentiment and a kneeling down before the actual fact—"a sense for the State," they now call it, as if *that* had still to be propagated! He who does not understand how brutal and unintelligent history is will never understand the stimulus to make it intelligent. Just think how rare it is to find a man with as great an intelligent knowledge of his own life as Goethe had: what amount of rationality can we

expect to find arising out of these other veiled and blind existences as they work chaotically with and in opposition to each other?

And it is especially naïve when Hellwald, the author of a history of culture, warns us away from all "ideals," simply because history has killed them off one after the other

156

To bring to light without reserve the stupidity and the want of reason in human things: that is the aim of *our* brethren and colleagues. People will then have to distinguish what is essential in them, what is incorrigible, and what is still susceptible of further improvement. But "Providence" must be kept out of the question, for it is a conception that enables people to take things too easily. I wish to breathe the breath of *this* purpose into science. Let us advance our knowledge of mankind! The good and rational in man is accidental or apparent, or the contrary of something very irrational. There will come a time when *training* will be the only thought.

157

Surrender to necessity is exactly what I do not teach—for one must first know this necessity to be necessary. There may perhaps be many necessities; but in general this inclination is simply a bed of idleness.

158

To know history now means: to recognise how all those who believed in a Providence took things too easily. There is no such thing. If human affairs are seen to go forward in a loose and disordered way, do not think that a god has any purpose in view by letting them do so or that he is neglecting them. We can now see in a general way that the history of Christianity on earth has been one of the most dreadful chapters in history, and that a stop *must* be put to it. True, the influence of antiquity has been observed in Christianity even in our own time; and, as it diminishes, so will our knowledge of antiquity diminish also to an even greater extent. Now is the best time to recognise it: we are no longer prejudiced in favour of Christianity, but we still understand it, and also the antiquity that forms part of it, so far as this antiquity stands in line with Christianity.

159

Philosophic heads must occupy themselves one day with the collective account of antiquity and make up its balance-sheet. If we have this, antiquity will be overcome. All

the shortcomings which now vex us have their roots in antiquity, so that we cannot continue to treat this account with the mildness which has been customary up to the present. The atrocious crime of mankind which rendered Christianity possible, as it actually became possible, is the *guilt* of antiquity. With Christianity antiquity will also be cleared away.—At the present time it is not so very far behind us, and it is certainly not possible to do justice to it. It has been availed of in the most dreadful fashion for purposes of repression, and has acted as a support for religious oppression by disguising itself as "culture." It was common to hear the saying, "Antiquity has been conquered by Christianity."

This was a historical fact, and it was thus thought that no harm could come of any dealings with antiquity. Yes; it is so plausible to say that we find Christian ethics "deeper" than Socrates! Plato was easier to compete with! We are at the present time, so to speak, merely chewing the cud of the very battle which was fought in the first centuries of the Christian era—with the exception of the fact that now, instead of the clearly perceptible antiquity which then existed, we have merely its pale ghost; and, indeed, even Christianity itself has become rather ghostlike. It is a battle fought *after* the decisive battle, a post-vibration. In the end, all the forces of which antiquity consisted have reappeared in Christianity in the crudest possible form: it is nothing new, only quantitatively extraordinary.

160

What severs us for ever from the culture of antiquity is the fact that its foundations have become too shaky for us. A criticism of the Greeks is at the same time a criticism of Christianity; for the bases of the spirit of belief, the religious cult, and witchcraft, are the same in both.—There are many rudimentary stages still remaining; but they are by this time almost ready to collapse.

This would be a task: to characterise Greek antiquity as irretrievably lost, and with it Christianity also and the foundations upon which, up to the present time, our society and politics have been based.

161

Christianity has conquered antiquity—yes; that is easily said. In the first place, it is itself a piece of antiquity; in the second place, it has preserved antiquity; in the third place, it has never been in combat with the pure ages of antiquity. Or rather: in order that Christianity itself might remain, it had to let itself be overcome by the spirit of antiquity—for example, the idea of empire, the community, and so forth. We are

suffering from the uncommon want of clearness and uncleanliness of human things; from the ingenious mendacity which Christianity has brought among men.

162

It is almost laughable to see how nearly all the sciences and arts of modern times grow from the scattered seeds which have been wafted towards us from antiquity, and how Christianity seems to us here to be merely the evil chill of a long night, a night during which one is almost inclined to believe that all is over with reason and honesty among men. The battle waged against the natural man has given rise to the unnatural man.

163

With the dissolution of Christianity a great part of antiquity has become incomprehensible to us, for instance, the entire religious basis of life. On this account an imitation of antiquity is a false tendency: the betrayers or the betrayed are the philologists who still think of such a thing. We live in a period when many different conceptions of life are to be found: hence the present age is instructive to an unusual degree; and hence also the reason why it is so ill, since it suffers from the evils of all its tendencies at once. The man of the future: the European man.

164

The German Reformation widened the gap between us and antiquity: was it necessary for it to do so? It once again introduced the old contrast of "Paganism" and "Christianity"; and it was at the same time a protest against the decorative culture of the Renaissance—it was a victory gained over the same culture as had formerly been conquered by early Christianity.

In regard to "worldly things," Christianity preserved the grosser views of the ancients. All the nobler elements in marriage, slavery, and the State are unchristian. It *required* the distorting characteristics of worldliness to prove itself.

165

The connection between humanism and religious rationalism was emphasised as a Saxonian trait by Köchly: the type of this philologist is Gottfried Hermann.[14]

[14] Johann Gottfried Jakob Hermann (1772-1848), noted for his works on metre and Greek grammar.—TR.

166

I understand religions as narcotics: but when they are given to such nations as the Germans, I think they are simply rank poison.

167

All religions are, in the end, based upon certain physical assumptions, which are already in existence and adapt the religions to their needs: for example, in Christianity, the contrast between body and soul, the unlimited importance of the earth as the "world," the marvellous occurrences in nature. If once the opposite views gain the mastery—for instance, a strict law of nature, the helplessness and superfluousness of all gods, the strict conception of the soul as a bodily process—all is over. But all Greek culture is based upon such views.

168

When we look from the character and culture of the Catholic Middle Ages back to the Greeks, we see them resplendent indeed in the rays of higher humanity; for, if we have anything to reproach these Greeks with, we must reproach the Middle Ages with it also to a much greater extent. The worship of the ancients at the time of the Renaissance was therefore quite honest and proper. We have carried matters further in one particular point, precisely in connection with that dawning ray of light. We have outstripped the Greeks in the clarifying of the world by our studies of nature and men. Our knowledge is much greater, and our judgments are more moderate and just.

In addition to this, a more gentle spirit has become widespread, thanks to the period of illumination which has weakened mankind—but this weakness, when turned into morality, leads to good results and honours us. Man has now a great deal of freedom: it is his own fault if he does not make more use of it than he does; the fanaticism of opinions has become much milder. Finally, that we would much rather live in the present age than in any other is due to science; and certainly no other race in the history of mankind has had such a wide choice of noble enjoyments as ours—even if our race has not the palate and stomach to experience a great deal of joy. But one can live comfortably amid all this "freedom" only when one merely understands it and does not wish to participate in it—that is the modern crux. The participants appear to be less attractive than ever: how stupid they must be!

Thus the danger arises that knowledge may avenge itself on us, just as ignorance avenged itself on us during the Middle Ages. It is all over with those religions which place their trust in gods, Providences, rational orders of the universe, miracles, and sacraments; as is also the case with certain types of holy lives, such as ascetics; for we only too easily conclude that such people are the effects of sickness and an aberrant brain. There is no doubt that the contrast between a pure, incorporeal soul and a body has been almost set aside. Who now believes in the immortality of the soul! Everything connected with blessedness or damnation, which was based upon certain erroneous physiological assumptions, falls to the ground as soon as these assumptions are recognised to be errors. Our scientific assumptions admit just as much of an interpretation and utilisation in favour of a besotting philistinism—yea, in favour of bestiality—as also in favour of "blessedness" and soul-inspiration. As compared with all previous ages, we are now standing on a new foundation, so that something may still be expected from the human race.

As regards culture, we have hitherto been acquainted with only one complete form of it, *i.e.,* the city-culture of the Greeks, based as it was on their mythical and social foundations; and one incomplete form, the Roman, which acted as an adornment of life, derived from the Greek. Now all these bases, the mythical and the politico-social, have changed; our alleged culture has no stability, because it has been erected upon insecure conditions and opinions which are even now almost ready to collapse.—When we thoroughly grasp Greek culture, then, we see that it is all over with it. The philologist is thus a great sceptic in the present conditions of our culture and training: that is his mission. Happy is he if, like Wagner and Schopenhauer, he has a dim presentiment of those auspicious powers amid which a new culture is stirring.

169

Those who say: "But antiquity nevertheless remains as a subject of consideration for pure science, even though all its educational purposes may be disowned," must be answered by the words, What is pure science here! Actions and characteristics must be judged; and those who judge them must stand above them: so you must first devote your attention to overcoming antiquity. If you do not do that, your science is not pure, but impure and limited: as may now be perceived.

170

To overcome Greek antiquity through our own deeds: this would be the right task. But before we can do this we must first *know* it!—There is a thoroughness which is merely an excuse for inaction. Let it be recollected how much Goethe knew of antiquity: certainly not so much as a philologist, and yet sufficient to contend with it in such a way

as to bring about fruitful results. One *should* not even know more about a thing than one could create. Moreover, the only time when we can actually *recognise* something is when we endeavour to *make* it. Let people but attempt to live after the manner of antiquity; and they will at once come hundreds of miles nearer to antiquity than they can do with all their erudition.—Our philologists never show that they strive to emulate antiquity in any way, and thus *their* antiquity remains without any effect on the schools.

The study of the spirit of emulation (Renaissance, Goethe), and the study of despair.

The non-popular element in the new culture of the Renaissance: a frightful fact!

171

The worship of classical antiquity, as it was to be seen in Italy, maybe interpreted as the only earnest, disinterested, and fecund worship which has yet fallen to the lot of antiquity. It is a splendid example of Don Quixotism; and philology at best is such Don Quixotism. Already at the time of the Alexandrian savants, as with all the sophists of the first and second centuries, the Atticists, &c., the scholars are imitating something purely and simply chimerical and pursuing a world that never existed. The same trait is seen throughout antiquity: the manner in which the Homeric heroes were copied, and all the intercourse held with the myths, show traces of it. Gradually all Greek antiquity has become an object of Don Quixotism. It is impossible to understand our modern world if we do not take into account the enormous influence of the purely fantastic. This is now confronted by the principle: there can be no imitation. Imitation, however, is merely an artistic phenomenon, *i.e.,* it is based on appearance: we can accept manners, thoughts, and so on through imitation; but imitation can create nothing. True, the creator can borrow from all sides and nourish himself in that way. And it is only as creators that we shall be able to take anything from the Greeks. But in what respect can philologists be said to be creators! There must be a few dirty jobs, such as knackers' men, and also text-revisers: are the philologists to carry out tasks of this nature?

172

What, then, is antiquity *now,* in the face of modern art, science, and philosophy? It is no longer the treasure-chamber of all knowledge; for in natural and historical science we have advanced greatly beyond it. Oppression by the church has been stopped. A *pure* knowledge of antiquity is now possible, but perhaps also a more ineffective and weaker knowledge.—This is right enough, if effect is known only as effect on the masses; but for the breeding of higher minds antiquity is more powerful than ever.

Goethe as a German poet-philologist; Wagner as a still higher stage: his clear glance for the only worthy position of art. No ancient work has ever had so powerful an effect as

the "Orestes" had on Wagner. The objective, emasculated philologist, who is but a philistine of culture and a worker in "pure science," is, however, a sad spectacle.

173

Between our highest art and philosophy and that which is recognised to be truly the oldest antiquity, there is no contradiction: they support and harmonise with one another. It is in this that I place my hopes.

174

The main standpoints from which to consider the importance of antiquity:

1. There is nothing about it for young people; for it exhibits man with an entire freedom from shame.

2. It is not for direct imitation, but it teaches by which means art has hitherto been perfected in the highest degree.

3. It is accessible only to a few, and there should be a *police des mœurs* in charge of it —as there should be also in charge of bad pianists who play Beethoven.

4. These few apply this antiquity to the judgment of our own time, as critics of it; and they judge antiquity by their own ideals and are thus critics of antiquity.

5. The contrast between the Hellenic and the Roman should be studied, and also the contrast between the early Hellenic and the late Hellenic. ---Explanation of the different types of culture.

175

The advancement of science at the expense of man is one of the most pernicious things in the world. The stunted man is a retrogression in the human race: he throws a shadow over all succeeding generations. The tendencies and natural purpose of the individual science become degenerate, and science itself is finally shipwrecked: it has made progress, but has either no effect at all on life or else an immoral one.

176

Men not to be used like things!

From the former very incomplete philology and knowledge of antiquity there flowed out a stream of freedom, while our own highly developed knowledge produces slaves and

serves the idol of the State.

177

There will perhaps come a time when scientific work will be carried on by women, while the men will have to *create,* using the word in a spiritual sense: states, laws, works of art, &c.

People should study typical antiquity just as they do typical men: *i.e.,* imitating what they understand of it, and, when the pattern seems to lie far in the distance, considering ways and means and preliminary preparations, and devising stepping-stones.

178

The whole feature of study lies in this: that we should study only what we feel we should like to imitate; what we gladly take up and have the desire to multiply. What is really wanted is a progressive canon of the *ideal* model, suited to boys, youths, and men.

179

Goethe grasped antiquity in the right way: invariably with an emulative soul. But who else did so? One sees nothing of a well-thought-out pedagogics of this nature: who knows that there is a certain knowledge of antiquity which cannot be imparted to youths!

The puerile character of philology: devised by teachers for pupils.

180

The ever more and more common form of the ideal: first men, then institutions, finally tendencies, purposes, or the want of them. The highest form: the conquest of the ideal by a backward movement from tendencies to institutions, and from institutions to men.

181

I will set down in writing what I no longer believe—and also what I do believe. Man stands in the midst of the great whirlpool of forces, and imagines that this whirlpool is rational and has a rational aim in view: error! The only rationality that we know is the small reason of man: he must exert it to the utmost, and it invariably leaves him in the lurch if he tries to place himself in the hands of "Providence."

Our only happiness lies in reason; all the remainder of the world is dreary. The highest reason, however, is seen by me in the work of the artist, and he can feel it to be such: there may be something which, when it can be consciously brought forward, may afford an even greater feeling of reason and happiness: for example, the course of the solar system, the breeding and education of a man.

Happiness lies in rapidity of feeling and thinking: everything else is slow, gradual, and stupid. The man who could feel the progress of a ray of light would be greatly enraptured, for it is very rapid.

Thinking of one's self affords little happiness. But when we do experience happiness therein the reason is that we are not thinking of ourselves, but of our ideal. This lies far off; and only the rapid man attains it and rejoices.

An amalgamation of a great centre of men for the breeding of better men is the task of the future. The individual must become familiarised with claims that, when he says Yea to his own will, he also says Yea to the will of that centre—for example, in reference to a choice, as among women for marriage, and likewise as to the manner in which his child shall be brought up. Until now no single individuality, or only the very rarest, have been free: they were influenced by these conceptions, but likewise by the bad and contradictory organisation of the individual purposes.

182

Education is in the first place instruction in what is necessary, and then in what is changing and in-constant. The youth is introduced to nature, and the sway of laws is everywhere pointed out to him; followed by an explanation of the laws of ordinary society. Even at this early stage the question will arise: was it absolutely necessary that this should have been so? He gradually comes to need history to ascertain how these things have been brought about. He learns at the same time, however, that they may be changed into something else. What is the extent of man's power over things? This is the question in connection with all education. To show how things may become other than what they are we may, for example, point to the Greeks. We need the Romans to show how things became what they were.

183

If, then, the Romans had spurned the Greek culture, they would perhaps have gone to pieces completely. When could this culture have once again arisen? Christianity and Romans and barbarians: this would have been an onslaught: it would have entirely wiped out culture. We see the danger amid which genius lives. Cicero was one of the greatest benefactors of humanity, even in his own time.

There is no "Providence" for genius; it is only for the ordinary run of people and their wants that such a thing exists: they find their satisfaction, and later on their justification.

184

Thesis: the death of ancient culture inevitable. Greek culture must be distinguished as the archetype; and it must be shown how all culture rests upon shaky conceptions.

The dangerous meaning of art: as the protectress and galvanisation of dead and dying conceptions; history, in so far as it wishes to restore to us feelings which we have overcome. To feel "historically" or "just" towards what is already past, is only possible when we have risen above it. But the danger in the adoption of the feelings necessary for this is very great: let the dead bury their dead, so that we ourselves may not come under the influence of the smell of the corpses.

THE DEATH OF THE OLD CULTURE.

1. The signification of the studies of antiquity hitherto pursued: obscure; mendacious.

2. As soon as they recognise the goal they condemn themselves to death: for their goal is to describe ancient culture itself as one to be demolished.

3. The collection of all the conceptions out of which Hellenic culture has grown up. Criticism of religion, art, society, state, morals.

4. Christianity is likewise denied.

5. Art and history—dangerous.

6. The replacing of the study of antiquity which has become superfluous for the training of our youth.

Thus the task of the science of history is completed, and it itself has become superfluous, if the entire inward continuous circle of past efforts has been condemned. Its place must be taken by the science of the *future*.

185

"Signs" and "miracles" are not believed; only a "Providence" stands in need of such things. There is no help to be found either in prayer or asceticism or in "vision." If all these things constitute religion, then there is no more religion for me.

My religion, if I can still apply this name to something, lies in the work of breeding genius: from such training everything is to be hoped. All consolation comes from art. Education is love for the offspring; an excess of love over and beyond our self-love.

Religion is "love beyond ourselves." The work of art is the model of such a love beyond ourselves, and a perfect model at that

186

The stupidity of the will is Schopenhauer's greatest thought, if thoughts be judged from the standpoint of power. We can see in Hartmann how he juggled away this thought. Nobody will ever call something stupid—God.

187

This, then, is the new feature of all the future progress of the world: men must never again be ruled over by religious conceptions. Will they be any *worse?* It is not my experience that they behave well and morally under the yoke of religion; I am not on the side of Demopheles.[15] The fear of a beyond, and then again the fear of divine punishments will hardly have made men better.

[15] A type in Schopenhauer's Essay "On Religion." See "Parerga and Paralipomena."—TR.

188

Where something great makes its appearance and lasts for a relatively long time, we may premise a careful breeding, as in the case of the Greeks. How did so many men become free among them? Educate educators! But the first educators must educate themselves! And it is for these that I write.

189

The denial of life is no longer an easy matter: a man may become a hermit or a monk—and what is thereby denied! This conception has now become deeper: it is above all a discerning denial, a denial based upon the will to be just; not an indiscriminate and wholesale denial.

190

The seer must be affectionate, otherwise men will have no confidence in him: Cassandra.

191

The man who to-day wishes to be good and saintly has a more difficult task than formerly: in order to be "good," he must not be so unjust to knowledge as earlier saints were. He would have to be a knowledge-saint: a man who would link love with knowledge, and who would have nothing to do with gods or demigods or "Providence," as the Indian saints likewise had nothing to do with them. He should also be healthy, and should keep himself so, otherwise he would necessarily become distrustful of himself. And perhaps he would not bear the slightest resemblance to the ascetic saint, but would be much more like a man of the world.

192

The better the state is organised, the duller will humanity be.

To make the individual uncomfortable is my task!

The great pleasure experienced by the man who liberates himself by fighting.

Spiritual heights have had their age in history; inherited energy belongs to them. In the ideal state all would be over with them.

193

The highest judgment on life only arising from the highest energy of life. The mind must be removed as far as possible from exhaustion.

In the centre of the world-history judgment will be the most accurate; for it was there that the greatest geniuses existed.

The breeding of the genius as the only man who can truly value and deny life.

Save your genius! shall be shouted unto the people: set him free! Do all you can to unshackle him.

The feeble and poor in spirit must not be allowed to judge life.

194

I dream of a combination of men who shall make no concessions, who shall show no consideration, and who shall be willing to be called "destroyers": they apply the standard of their criticism to everything and sacrifice themselves to truth. The bad and the false shall be brought to light! We will not build prematurely we do not know, indeed, whether we shall ever be able to build, or if it would not be better not to build at all There are lazy pessimists and resigned ones in this world—and it is to their number that we refuse to belong!

FINIS.